Labour Monthly

EDITED BY R. PALME DUTT

R. P. DUTT

The Crisis of Democracy

FRANK PITCAIRN

Munich—Continued

DECEMBER 1938 SIXPENCE

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LABOUR MONTHLY

A Magazine of International Labour

VOLUME 20 DECEMBER 1938 NUMBER 12

Editor: R. PALME DUTT

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Our Circulation

The November number of the LABOUR MONTHLY was again sold out within a few days of issue—in spite of the fact that the number of copies printed was increased. We knew that it was a good number, but we must confess that we under-estimated the demand that it would meet with. To those readers who have been disappointed in their efforts to obtain a copy we tender our apologies. While we shall do our best to ensure that they will not be disappointed again, we would remind them that the best way to prevent it is for them to order early.

This demand is an indication of the awakening of growing numbers of people to the implications of Munich and of the rising strength of the opposition to the Government. The fact is that, as one reader from Scotland puts it in a letter to us :

> the present world situation is such that some men are asking questions they never thought about before, and they are turning to the *Labour Monthly* for the answers.

And this is reflected in our sales, as the following extracts from letters show :

> I have got several new readers this month, mostly Labour Party, who all think that the Notes of the Month are really magnificent.

And from the U.S.A. :

> The Notes of the Month is a brilliant analysis and I hasten these words of congratulations and revolutionary greetings from across the sea. Your contributions to the working class movement in England and to the world proletariat will become another of those foundation stones of Marxism.

Or, again, from Holland :

> Thank you very much for the extra copies of the *Labour Monthly*. We are indeed very pleased to have them as we are always anxious to read them carefully.

At the same time we would remind our readers that our circulation has not yet reached the point where we can do without their financial, as well as their other support. We still have a monthly deficit to make up, which has to be covered by our guarantee fund. And we still want further contributions to our development fund to enable us to widen the scope of our work. We face the New Year with the confidence that this support will be forthcoming from our readers, new as well as old.

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NOTES OF THE MONTH

New Political Situation in Britain—The Crisis of Democracy—Re-grouping Which Way?—Degradation of Munich—General Awakening—A Historic Failure—Urgent Realities—"National" Government's Programme—"Appeasement" or Alliance with Fascism?—"Defence" or Arming the Enemy?—Rearmament for What?—Political Aims of Rearmament Campaign—"National Unity"—Orientation to Fascism in Britain—Rôle of Conservative Opposition—Dilemma of British Imperialism—Deepening Contradictions—Contradictions of the Conservative Opposition—Dangerous Tendencies—Labour's Decisive Rôle—The Lesson of Bridgwater—Labour's Responsibility

LAST month we considered the international consequences of the Munich settlement. While subsequent events have underlined, sharpened, accelerated the new tendencies, the main analysis still holds. So far from there being the imaginary respite or lull as a result of the Munich betrayal, the exact opposite has happened, as it was bound to happen. The violent, unrestrained assault of world reaction has not lost a week or a day to drive forward on every front at once. The new attack on Spain; the ratification of the Anglo-Italian Pact; piracy in the North Sea; the moves to give colonies to Hitler; the Nazi advance in South Eastern Europe; Japan's invasion of Southern China; Hitler's open bullying dictation to internal politics in Britain and France; the elaborate pogroms against Jews in Germany; Daladier's direct attack on the People's Front and democracy in France; the subtler attack now opening against democracy in Britain in the name of defence and national unity; Labour's setback in the municipal elections; the advance of reaction against Roosevelt in the United States elections: all these are the direct immediate sequel of Munich in the first weeks. This offensive requires urgently to be stemmed before its flood engulfs the world. It can only be stemmed if the working class and

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democratic forces in Britain and France rally and find their unity. On the internal fight in Britain and France depends the immediate future of world politics. It is therefore all the more important now to come to the problems of the new situation in Britain and the fateful choice for the whole future which is opening out before the people of this country.

FOR Britain, as for the world, Munich is the starting point of a far-reaching transformation, whose extent is only beginning to be realised. Which way that transformation will go depends on the struggle now opening. In the face of the new emergency there is still widespread confusion and uncertainty. The leaders of the different sections still hesitate before the magnitude of the issues which are revealing themselves. There is a trying out of new programmes, a searching after new alignments. But through all the manœuvrings and partial experimental approaches, alike on the side of the Government and of the divers opposition elements, the one central issue stands out ever more sharply. That issue needs to be stated in the simplest possible terms. *The offensive of reaction which conquered at Munich is now being carried forward into Britain.* The alliance with fascism abroad carries with it the orientation to fascism at home. This is the direction in which the big business interests associated with the Chamberlain Cabinet are moving. This is the direction to which Hitler's commands to Britain are aimed. This is the menace, no longer speculative and remote, but drawing within the region of immediate politics, to which even moderate opinion is beginning to awaken.

WILL the labour and democratic forces rally in time to defeat this menace? A profound regrouping of political forces is preparing. Will this regrouping be carried out for the benefit of those interests which are working to follow up the alliance with fascism by the destruction of democracy at home? Or will the organised working class movement, the representative of the real majority of the nation, take the initiative in organising this regrouping so as to form a united democratic and truly national front, which

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will sweep away the traitors and accomplices of fascism and build a new and strengthened democracy, capable of withstanding fascism at home and abroad? This is the basic issue of the political situation in Britain to-day.

MUNICH touched the lowest depths of the modern history of imperialist Britain—lower than the orgies of Mafeking night, the worst excesses of the war or the "Hang the Kaiser" election. If that West End mob which on the fateful day of capitulation hailed with delirious acclamation their Prime Minister, because they had succeeded in running away from the dictators, because they had torn up their obligations, because they had betrayed a brave and loyal people who, stationed in the front line of danger, a small people faced with a Goliath, had had every reason to be afraid and had not been afraid, and had handed them over to the gangsters and terrorists in the mythical belief that they were thereby saving their own skins; if that were a true picture of the British people, then it would be a spectacle of degradation and corruption not even worthy of pity, recalling only the last days of the Roman Empire, a spectacle of a people ripe for the knife of the slaughterer and the whip of the conqueror. That Hitler has formed such an opinion of Britain, thanks to Chamberlain, is evident from his language since Munich.

BUT it is not a true picture of the British people; and the Chamberlains and Astors and their parasite following no more represent the British people than the Tsars and Rasputins represented the Russian people. Despite all the deceptions and acclamations of the servile synchronised press, the core of the British people, the industrial working class in the most important areas in the country, as reports from the factories revealed, remained bitter and distrustful even during the days of Munich, whatever genuflexions their leaders might be performing in parliament. With merciless suddenness the pæans to Chamberlain as the saviour of peace had to fade into the background and give place to the thunder of the war-drums; and Chamberlain himself had

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to admit that this talk of "peace in our time" was merely spoken "in moments of some emotion, after I had driven through miles of excited, enthusiastic, cheering people," and therefore not to be taken seriously. All the machine-made plaudits of the press and sycophants' chorus have not been able to conceal the general awakening of the people to the real menace which now confronts them thanks to the policy of Chamberlain.

AT the outset in any survey it is necessary to face the serious facts of the present situation, both in respect of the urgent realities which now face the British people, and the failure of any adequate response or leadership as yet from the traditional parties and representatives of democracy. In the great testing of the Munich crisis the traditional parties of the opposition failed. The Labour Party had a formally correct programme in the resolution of the Blackpool Trades Union Congress for the united stand of Britain, France and the Soviet Union for the integral defence of Czechoslovakia. A resolute fight on the basis of that programme against the policy of Chamberlain could have made his betrayal impossible, and could thus have saved both Czechoslovakia and peace. But in the actual crisis the Labour Party leadership failed: first, through the acceptance of the flight to Berchtesgaden ("Good luck, Chamberlain!"); second, through the implicit acceptance of the Anglo-French Plan as a basis after the Godesberg ultimatum; third, through the welcome to the Munich Conference in the fatal unanimous session of Parliament on September 28 (when only Gallacher voiced the policy of the entire Labour Movement and democracy against Chamberlain); and fourth, in the acceptance of the myth of the supposed "relief" and "saving of peace" through Munich ("all thoughtful men had felt relief," "no one questioned that the Prime Minister had been very energetic to preserve peace"—Attlee in the parliamentary debate on Munich), when in reality the war danger had been made far more urgent than ever before. Criticism was sounded only after the event, and even so has mainly been conducted on the basis that the Government has "no policy," is a weak

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victim of " indecision and ineptitude " (Labour Party Manifesto of October 28), and is technically incompetent in rearmament. The Liberal Party has a similar record, as also the Conservative opposition. All were vocal in criticism only after the crisis was over ; and such posthumous criticism inevitably loses in weight. To complete the picture, the Independent Labour Party remnant succeeded in the difficult task of descending to a lower depth of its ignominy by covering the pro-fascist Prime Minister with lickspittle adulation, not only during the crisis, but even after it, when the rest had begun to criticise.

THE bill has now to be paid for this collapse of opposition leadership during the crisis. The British people find themselves to-day in a world of unleashed and raging war forces, the dykes of peace torn down and the law of the jungle enthroned through the action of their own Government, their former allies lost or weakened, and their own defences insecure. Piracy reaches to their own coasts, by the connivance of their Government; and that same Government prepares to make a pact of friendship and alliance with the pirate Power, which has sent eighty British seamen to their deaths in the interval between the adoption and ratification of the Pact. At home the ravages of the Fifth Column are equally evident. While the arms firms, the friends and supporters of the Government, are doubling, trebling and quadrupling their profits into millions of pounds (Vickers-Armstrong from £188,000 in 1933 to £867,000 in 1937; Cammell Laird from £2,000 in 1933 to £278,000 in 1937; John Brown from £2,000 in 1933 to £488,000 in 1937); while the principal aircraft firms are declaring dividends of 30 per cent. and 40 per cent. with share bonuses of 50 per cent. thrown in; while Munich sent arms shares soaring (William Beardmore from 10s. 3d. on October 14 to 16s. 3d. on October 25, Dorman Long from 22s. to 28s. 9d. between the same dates); the results of the arms programme, after an expenditure of £1,300 million, are reported to show a collapse of the programme and a heavy inferiority to the fascist Powers. For solution the attack is now threatened

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against the social services and the standards of the people. At the same time unemployment rises, and the beginnings of the new economic crisis spread. While wages have fallen behind the rise in the cost of living, profits have shown a new high record, soaring beyond the level of the previous record year of 1929. In this situation, on the basis of this Government policy of betrayal of peace and alliance with fascism, in the midst of this orgy of profiteering, the call is sounded for "national unity," "national service" and the organisation of man-power, with the hint of future industrial conscription. The course of the alliance with fascism abroad is to be completed by the course to fascism at home. These are the realities of the situation which the British people has now to face.

THE Government's programme is presented with an air of elementary simplicity. In terms of the current catchwords, it is presented as a programme based on three main pillars: (1) the speeding up of rearmament for effective defence; (2) "appeasement" through conciliation with the fascist Powers; (3) "national unity" in the present emergency. The catchwords are skilfully chosen to trap the unwary. On the face of it, the programme might appear the dully sensible programme of a prudent, moderate man, caught in a dangerous situation for which he bears no responsibility: to maintain such defence as is necessary, while hoping for peace; to work for peace by exploring the possibilities of agreement with the potential fascist enemies; and to recognise the necessity of unity in the face of danger. Unfortunately, the labels bear no relation to the contents. The actual policy is the exact opposite. A real programme of defence, of peace, and of unity of the people could only be carried out in direct opposition to everything for which the Government stands.

"APPEASEMENT" is the euphemistic term for the alliance with fascism. It means direct assistance and encouragement to the fascist warmaking Powers. It has nothing to do with peace. It has everything to do with the real counter-revolutionary aims of the Government, which

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are in their nature aims making for war. For seven years this policy has led to the extension of war over the world. It found expression in the support of German rearmament, the sabotage of disarmament, the tearing up of the disarmament clauses of Versailles ; in the support of Japan in the Far East and blocking of the American peace endeavours ; in the support of the Italian-German war of conquest against the Spanish Republic ; in the betrayal of Czechoslovakia and the deliberate undermining of the peace front in Europe. To-day it finds expression in the moves to assist the fascist blockade of Spain by granting belligerent rights to Franco, and to grant colonial concessions for the strengthening of German fascism. The final aim of this policy is directed to the destruction of democracy and the labour movement in Europe, with the hope of war on the Soviet Union. But the actual process of this policy involves such continuous strategic strengthening of the fascist Powers, through the continuous capitulations, that it brings into ever closer view the possibility of these Powers turning their attack first on the British Empire as representing the richest and most vulnerable spoils. Either outcome means the certainty of world war ; and in the event of war between the fascist Powers and Britain, it means that these Powers have been given the greatest possible strength, while Britain has been weakened and deprived of allies. The one policy which still holds out the possibility of preventing world war, the policy of the Peace Bloc of States opposed to aggression, is rejected by the Government.

IS it possible to regard the Government as concerned for the defence of the British people ? Hard facts prove the ontrary. By the Munich settlement the Government deliberately threw away and handed over to the potential enemy nore armaments in one week than it could build up in two ears of rearmament. A letter from a member of the German pposition, appearing in *Germany To-day*, is worth quoting :

> I must say that I do not understand the present trend of English politics, and the same is true of most of my friends who belong to the opposition movement against Hitler. What does Mr. Chamberlain want to rearm for, to spend thousands of

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> millions of marks on new aeroplanes, machine guns, etc., after he has completed the greatest disarmament programme ever executed voluntarily by the Government of any country ?
>
> Within one week Chamberlain has disarmed 1,500,000 Czechoslovakian soldiers, 1,500 aeroplanes, the greatest fortification system in Eastern Europe, thousands of pieces of light and heavy artillery, tanks, anti-aircraft guns, etc.
>
> But he has not only disarmed all this, he has gone even further. Mr. Chamberlain has delivered a considerable part of these armaments into the hands of Hitler. Scapa Flow was nothing as compared with Munich. For Scapa Flow was the result of a heavy military defeat—and yet we succeeded in sinking our ships. At Munich Mr. Chamberlain voluntarily surrendered much more and saw to it that it arrived safely into the hands of Hitler.

In view of these facts, this German democratic observer not unnaturally asks: "What does Mr. Chamberlain want to rearm for?" The conclusion he reaches is worth noting:

> The only explanation we have for this is that Mr. Chamberlain wants to rearm in order to follow up Munich and in order to join Hitler in his aggressive venture. Many of my friends believe the same.

IT is evident that the Government's programme of rearmament can only be judged in relation to its policy. Armaments programmes, as Captain Liddell Hart has explained in his recent book *Through the Fog of War*, are part of the tactics of modern war; "they are vain if you are beaten strategically." It is manifest that, if the Government were seriously concerned for the defence of the people, it would place in the forefront the question of winning allies, that is, the question of the peace front; it would be concerned to win allies, not to destroy them, as in the case of Czechoslovakia; to maintain strategic positions, instead of voluntarily to throw them away, as in the case of the assistance to the fascist domination of Gibraltar and the Balearics. The fact that the opposite policy is pursued transforms the significance of the rearmament programme.

THE conception of Britain in isolation carrying out such a rearmament (or even with France alone; but in fact British policy has already progressively weakened France, and

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is working to hand over the armed strength of France, as with Czechoslovakia, to fascist domination and vassaldom to Hitler) as to be capable of outstripping and defeating single-handed the three fascist Powers is so obviously fantastic as to be only suitable for imbeciles. It is not, however, reasonable (even though it appears to be tempting to the simpler forms of opposition propaganda) to treat the Government representing the dominant forces of the most experienced ruling class in the world as a Government of imbeciles. The conclusion inevitably follows that the rearmament policy of the Government is directed to aims which are not primarily concerned with the defence of the British people, but may even imperil their defence. This is confirmed by the contemptuous and niggardly treatment of air raid precautions, and concentration on long-range bombers. A reactionary Government of world imperialism is concerned primarily with its reactionary aims all over the world ; and domestic defence is secondary to this. The rearmament may have its rôle to play in relation to the fascist Powers, both to strengthen the hands of the Government in its negotiations with them, and to endeavour to force their offensive in the directions desired by the British reactionaries ; but this is not contrary to the policy of the alliance with fascism. In consequence the propaganda of the Government for intensified rearmament is by no means directed for the defence of democracy in Britain, but conceals political aims which are in fact directed against democracy in Britain.

THE immediate political aims behind the Government's rearmament propaganda are manifest, and are in fact only a continuation and higher stage of the same manœuvre which has been consistently employed during the past two years to promote the pro-fascist policy of the Government. The technical issue of rearmament is presented in substitution for the issue of policy. Any opposition is declared at once to be opposition to the necessary provision for the defence of the people or the defence of peace. If on the other hand, through fear of such an accusation, the opposition gives its support to the rearmament programme of the Government,

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port is at once proclaimed to reveal national unity the policy of the Government, and the demand is pressed for all-parties co-operation and trade union co-operation with the "National" Government. At the same time the demands for speeding up rearmament, for national service and the organisation of man-power, are used to prepare the ground for the attack on democracy, on trade union rights and labour standards. In all these ways the issue of rearmament is made a political weapon for carrying forward the pro-fascist policy and attack on democracy, while the real defence of the people is neglected.

IT is in this connection that the slogan of "national unity," now increasingly emphasised by the Government, and echoed on all sides, including by some of its opponents, takes on its significance as the hallmark of a further stage in the process begun by the formation of the "National" Government against Labour in 1931, and becomes the covert expression of a political programme. Unity of the people, of the masses of the people, of all democratic forces, as demonstrated in Republican Spain, is indispensable for the victory of democracy against its enemies, against fascism and the friends of fascism within the country. Such national unity can only be realised on the basis of irreconcilable struggle against the traitors, against the friends and accomplices of fascism who work to destroy democracy and disrupt the nation, as they have already undermined its defences. But this is not what the Government and its spokesmen mean by "national unity." By "national unity" they mean the stifling of all democratic opposition, and the chloroforming of the nation into uniform support of the Government on the basis of its policy of collaboration with fascism and destruction of democracy. They mean the same process that they have already assisted in Czechoslovakia, for the destruction of democracy there, and are now working to promote in France. *The slogan of "national unity," as used by the Government, is the cover for the orientation to fascism in Britain.*

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AGAIN and again the spokesmen of the "National" Government seek to set their trap for the collaboration of the Labour Movement in the name of "national unity." Every weakness and sign of co-operation on the part of the Labour leadership, as over Munich, is immediately siezed on and utilized for this purpose. This was the significance of the keynote speech of Baldwin in the parliamentary debate on Munich:

> There is nothing more important from every point of view than, insofar as the defence of the country is concerned, that there should be no difference of party between Liberals, Labour and the Government, who should all work together to that end just as we should all have to fight together, without politics, if war should come.

Similarly Lord Stanhope for the Government drew as the main "lesson of the crisis" the co-operation of all parties:

> Another good thing was the unity of all parties. He would like to pay a tribute to the Opposition, who, when the crisis was at its height, did their best to support the Government and make a united, strong and powerful nation.

The dangerous fact must be faced that influential elements in the Labour leadership, especially those who have been most active in opposition to any popular front as the supposed surrender of the independence of the Labour Movement, have toyed with this conception of collaboration with the "National" Government. We are confident that the opposition of the overwhelming majority of the Labour Movement will defeat it. Any such collaboration of Labour with the "National" Government would be collaboration in the development to fascism in Britain. But the danger is not finally defeated and ended until Labour advances, beyond a negative attitude, to a positive alternative policy, to the leadership of the democratic forces against the "National" Government.

A subtler form of the issue of "national unity" has arisen with the question of the rôle of the Conservative Opposition, and especially with the new programme of the late Foreign Minister of the "National" Government, Anthony Eden. The increasing differentiation in the ranks of the Government's supporters, and the definite emergence of a

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Conservative Opposition, is a development of first-class importance in the British political situation. It reflects a real division within the British ruling class, a division which inevitably increases as the ruinous consequences of the policy of collaboration with fascism unfold themselves ; and every such division is of the utmost importance for the democratic forces and for the fight against fascism. Insofar as these dissident Conservatives expressed sharp and outspoken criticism of the Government's policy of capitulation to the fascist Powers and its consequences, they performed an objectively progressive rôle, whatever their particular programmes and outlooks. But in proportion as they advance to claim a political leading rôle in the present situation, it becomes all the more important, precisely because they claim to represent the fight against fascism, to examine with the utmost care their actual programme and policy.

THE division of the British ruling class reflects the increasing dilemma of British imperialism, which is becoming involved in inextricable contradictions. The policies of Chamberlain and of Churchill represent the two horns of the dilemma. Either policy has strong arguments in its favour from the traditional Conservative standpoint ; either policy results in contradictions repugnant to Conservatism and ultimately destructive of the established basis of the British Empire. The policy of Chamberlain, which is more strongly based and has the more powerful support, expresses the traditional counter-revolutionary aims of British reaction and the moneyed interests, which regard every reactionary force in the world as their natural ally. Yesterday, Tsarism was the darling of the City ; to-day it is fascism. The price of this policy, however, involves the successive weakening of the British Empire, the surrender of strategic positions and the strengthening of the potential enemies and plunderers of the Empire. Once this vulnerability to blackmail is recognised by the upstart reactionary Powers, the price mounts steeply ; and the old usurer pays with a sinking heart.

THE alternative policy of Churchill, representing the more active Empire interests, sees the main immediate

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menace in the aggressive aims of the fascist powers, and demands the effective defence of the Empire against them, rightly distrusting the talk of conciliation with these open plunderers. But this policy also, while starting from the most elementary and universally accepted Conservative principles, lands in contradictions which have so far militated against its acceptance by the most influential sections of the ruling class. For the price of this policy, if there is to be any attempt at effective defence against the aggression of the fascist Powers, requires alignment with the democratic and socialist forces at home and abroad, the weakening of reaction and counter-revolution, and the consequent strengthening of democracy and ultimately of socialism. Hence the majority of the Conservative imperialists in recent years have applauded the speeches of Churchill, but rejected his conclusions. Either way British imperialism finds itself faced with unacceptable conclusions, which reveal ever more clearly the writing on the wall. The logic of history is working itself out ; and it is working itself out in ways which point to the inevitable ultimate defeat alike of the counter-revolution and of all imperialism.

THIS contradiction adversely affects and weakens the Conservative Opposition, which is torn between its class interests and its strategic understanding of imperialist requirements. The consequent failure has shown itself most sharply over the war in Spain since its inception, where, owing to their anti-democratic prejudices, they continuously failed to follow out the logic of their own policy and take a stand with the Spanish Republic against the German-Italian invasion ; only the recent criticisms of Eden, after for two years as Foreign Minister maintaining the pro-fascist hypocrisy of "non-intervention," and Duff-Cooper's recent letter to the Spain Conference have expressed a partial and tardy wakening. Similarly they have shown extreme reluctance to take a definite stand for association with the Soviet Union, though the conception of Britain and France alone underking war against the fascist powers is a manifestly suicidal nception, replacing the prospect of an effective front for

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peace by the prospect of a destructive and doubtful war. These inconsistencies have been fully utilised by their opponents. Despite their demands for a strong stand the policy of the Conservative Opposition has been in reality more hesitant, vacillating and inconsistent than that of Chamberlain, who has in consequence held the dominating position in the Conservative camp. The dangerous outcome of these contradictions has shown itself further during the most recent period in new developments and tendencies which are important to note.

SINCE Munich the Conservative Opposition has come out with increasing sharpness in criticism of Chamberlain. But they have at the same time come out with a series of programmatic declarations, which, without yet defining a clearly worked out policy, reveal a trend that requires careful note by the democratic forces. They have in practice abandoned the conception of collective security and the Peace Front. Churchill, who had previously come nearest to advocacy of association with the Soviet Union, in his recent broadcast to the United States went out of his way to deliver a broadside against Communism and the Soviet Union. The recent foreign policy statements of Duff-Cooper and Amery concentrate on the organisation of the resources of the British Empire for war. The amendment of the Conservative Opposition to the King's Speech omits all mention of any peace policy, and speaks only of the need for "a united national policy to expedite rearmament," together with domestic measures of preparedness. While Chamberlain still hesitates to come out openly for conscription, Duff-Cooper, Amery and others actively make the running and openly demand conscription. Simultaneously they demand "a Government of all the parties." Thus the practical points of their programme become: "national unity," intensified rearmament and conscription. But this policy coincides with the main drive of the pro-fascist policy inside Britain, that is, the course to fascism in Britain. Objectively the present programme of the Conservative Opposition, as so far formulated, while criticising the foreign policy of the Chamberlain Govern-

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ment, assists the course to fascism inside Britain ; and it is even conceivable that under certain circumstances they might become the main pace-makers of such a development. This is a danger which needs to be clearly seen by the democratic forces.

WHAT is the conclusion to be drawn from this ? Is it that the Labour Movement should be satisfied with a position of isolation (and the consequent impotence and passivity before Chamberlain, repeatedly shown), having proved the impossibility of working with other elements ? The exact contrary is the conclusion. *The present menace arises because of the passivity and isolationist policy of the Labour Movement, its refusal to take the leadership of the democratic forces. It is only because of this that the Edens and Churchills and Duff-Coopers are able to place themselves in the forefront as the claimants to leadership of the opposition to Chamberlain.* If, through the inactivity of Labour, they should be able to establish such a position and assume a leading rôle as the alternative to Chamberlain, it would be a calamitous day for democracy and for the real fight against fascism. Does this mean that there is no room for sincere democratic Conservatives, Liberals or non-party elements, who wish to oppose Chamberlain and his disastrous pro-fascist policy, to join in a common democratic front for this fight ? There is every room and every need, provided that that democratic front is led by labour, on the basis of a positive programme for peace and in the interests of the people, and all elements are bound to that programme by the strength of the mass movement behind it. The conclusion is more than ever inescapable that the the leadership of all the democratic forces against fascism and its friends in this country can only be realised by the active initiative of the Labour Party, as the representative of the organised working class ; and that this urgent responsibility of uniting the fron
the people against the reactionary policies of the Cham
Government, and against the dangers before us, r
on the Labour Party in the present critical situa

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THE future of the British political situation depends on the action and response of the Labour Movement to the present urgent needs. All the opportunities are in our hands. But to realise these opportunities it is necessary to end the present passivity and semi-acquiescence in the policies of Chamberlain, and to end the present sectarian attitude to the task of uniting the working class and democratic forces. The result of the Bridgwater by-election has shown the strength of the demand for unity of the Popular Front against Chamberlain. The five by-elections up-to-date since Munich have shown a stationary Government vote (124,028 against 123,061 at the General Election), and an increase in the Opposition vote (131,714 against 109,904) by 20 per cent. *If this increase of 20 per cent. were maintained on a national scale, it represents already a majority of votes against the Government and could under certain conditions mean an effective Parliamentary majority to defeat the Government—provided the Opposition were united, and no votes were lost by splitting.* But this unity of the Opposition forces has still to be achieved. Such unity can only be achieved by the Labour Party taking the lead in drawing together all the working class and democratic organisations on a common immediate programme. This is now the urgent responsibility of the entire Labour Movement.

THE time for the Labour movement to awaken to the urgency of the situation and to rise to its responsibilities of leadership is short. The first condition for such awakening is to face the realities of the policy of the " National " Government and the decisive choice which has to be made by the people of this country. There may be confusions and self-deceptions in the policy of Chamberlain in his alliance with fascism, and blindness as to its ultimate outcome. So there were when Hugenberg at the head of German Conservatism allied himself with Hitler to place Hitler in power—as he thought, under his control—to the ultimate destruction of his own party and of his own political fortunes. But the aims of preservation of class-power drove forward the policy ; and the failure of unity of opposition of the masses of the

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people made its victory possible. We cannot afford to see the same process repeated with regard to the remaining democratic countries in Europe, through the new attack from outside on Spanish Democracy, through the direct attack on French Democracy, and through the attack on democracy in Britain. Unity of the working class and democratic forces in Britain to save the situation is imperative. Labour alone can take the initiative and fulfil the leadership to build up such a unity. It is not a question merely of some electoral-parliamentary combination, but of a mass movement of the people throughout the country. The conditions, the possibility and the programme for such a movement have been suggested in the decisions of the Fifteenth Congress of the Communist Party, whose report has now been published. This report is worth the study, not only of Communists and the left, but of the whole Labour movement, and of all who are concerned for the victory of the democratic forces in Britain and throughout the world in the critical struggle which has now opened. R. P. D.

NOT TURNING YOUR BACK ON 1938

The victories and setbacks of 1938 deserve to be studied in 1939. Nineteen-thirty-nine will be better understood by turning again to the lessons of nineteen-thirty-eight. R. Palme Dutt's "Notes of the Month" alone for that period, form a complete and almost perfect guide, not only to what has gone before, but to what must be done in the future. The *Labour Monthly* as a whole has a value and importance beyond ordinary measure.

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The Munich Policy—Continued

BY FRANK PITCAIRN

THROUGHOUT THE FIRST months of winter the menacing snout of Fascism snuffed and rootled visibly and audibly at the rickety fences of the Western democracies. Within a couple of months of Munich a number of factors in the situation had become very much clearer. For instance:

I.

The character and degree of the links existing and the links desired between the ruling forces of British capitalism and the Axis Powers. This was most clearly divulged in the discussions and controversies regarding policy in South Eastern Europe during the weeks after Munich.

A minor member of the Government—Mr. Shakespeare—was the first openly to declare that German trade expansion in South Eastern Europe was not merely not to be opposed but was to be "encouraged." A writer in the *Financial News*—a newspaper closely associated by personal ties with the Churchill Group—remarked that this was like talking of encouraging the wolf to eat the lamb. Later, Mr. Chamberlain himself made his position more explicit and showed in his references both to South East Europe and to the Far East that the conception of developments held by his Government is one envisaging the conquest by Fascist military forces, or the threat of them, of areas in which, under Fascist military protection, British usurers are to ply their trade.

Just as this point of view was described by the British Chamber of Commerce in Shanghai as being one of "smug complacency," so there were sharp controversies within the Conservative Party itself and, of course, in the City of London, regarding the position in South Eastern Europe. The Churchill Group appeared on the whole to favour resistance to German expansion in that area both by political and by financial and commercial activity in the still unsubjugated states.

Though scarcely expressed in public there was, however, a third line which appeared in many respects the most significant and strongest of all. In its clearest form, it was expressed in a message to the *Financial News* from its correspondent in Berlin discussing the practical perspectives of German trade expansion in Sudetenland and beyond. It was there suggested, and it seems clear that it was a suggestion which had been the object of discussion in Anglo-German financial and commercial circles in Berlin, that, in fact, German development of South Eastern Europe would require very large capital investment

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and hence raw material import, and that the process of construction would rule out the possibility of a rapid intensification of German competition in British markets for manufactured goods for a long time to come.

It will be seen that the proponents of this theory assumed that Germany in its future expansion to the South East will proceed along lines radically different from those followed in the subjugation of Austria. For in the case of Austria the most striking and outstanding feature of German policy was the fact that Austria was treated as a military colony and no attempt whatever was made to "develop" Austria as distinct from "squeezing" Austria in the same sense that all imperial powers squeeze their colonies. There appears to be no evidence whatever of any intention on the part of the German Government to do otherwise than "colonialise" such sections of South East Europe as it can lay hands on. Nevertheless, it is evidently the hope of some sections of the City of London and the Chamberlain Government that while refusing to oppose German expansion it may be possible to determine its character—the theory, of course, being that if Germany could be "persuaded" to develop South East Europe "respectably" (that is to say, according to the theories of those who studied economics at Oxford in the first decade of the present century) this will automatically involve an extension of the market for British manufactured goods.

Others, as the *Financial News* Berlin correspondent's message showed, while not apparently hopeful of an actual increased market for British manufactures, nevertheless saw another possibility revealed in the reference made in that message to the increased need for certain raw materials which would be felt by Germany in the course of this development.

It is at this point that policy towards German claims in South East Europe touches policy towards German colonial claims. The notorious "Pirow Plan" disclosed in the *Daily Mail* in mid-November and supported on the same day in a sinister article in *The Times*, was as evidently the official plan of Mr. Chamberlain and the Inner Cabinet as was that earlier and equally notorious *Times* leading article which first, amid a shower of official dementis, proposed the partition of Czechoslovakia. As a colonial expert remarked on reading the plan for an international consortium for the exploitation of certain colonial territories "this is going back to the days of Leopold's Congo and red rubber." No one doubts that there are plenty of gentlemen alike in Berlin, Paris and London to whom Sir Roger Casement's famous exposure of the colonial atrocities of his day reads as the description of a financial imperialist Paradise, temporarily lost and now perhaps to be regained by a combination of German arms—or the threat of them—London money, and the indecisions or worse of Pacifist Groups in the Western countries.

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II

The whole of this complex of relationships and admitted relationships had within a few weeks of Munich begun to be affected by a new factor referred to in the "Notes of the Month" in the November LABOUR MONTHLY.:—

> The Four Power combination is still far from realised and even the partial preliminary form reached has been reached under conditions very different from those originally intended by Britain. . . . In the process of attempting to reach it, the power of Hitler has been extended far beyond Britain's calculations, so that there can be no longer a question of a subservient tool, but of a fully independent force ; France has been weakened to a degree that destroys all balance in Europe while the new feature has appeared as now the strongest element in any combination, the Berlin-Rome Axis, which had no part in Britain's calculations and is extremely inconvenient to Britain by its power of parallel and alternating pressure. . . . The effective domination and initiative is in the hands of Hitler.

The implications of this situation have, since that was written become startlingly apparent—apparent particularly in the interplay now so plainly visible between the internal domestic politics of the Chamberlain Group and their relations to Berlin. Throughout the past weeks it has, for instance, been evident that if Chamberlain was to hold in line the votes which might reasonably be calculated to have been his on his return from Munich, it was even more necessary for him to preserve in the eyes of the electorate the illusion of "appeasement." As an American commentator put it "Chamberlain has nailed his yellow standard to the mast and that is the flag he must sail under or sink."

This situation involved a degree of intervention by Berlin in British internal politics more subtle, but perhaps no less important, than the open intervention proclaimed at Saarbruecken and Weimar. For evidently, since Chamberlain and the interests he represents had (for reasons which have been fully analysed in the LABOUR MONTHLY), placed themselves in this position, it lay in the power of Berlin, perpetually to demand submission on point after point ; on pain of a displeasure which would display itself in a refusal to proceed with the motions and gestures necessary to preserve the illusions necessary for Chamberlain in the face of the British electorate.

Up to the moment of writing possibly the most vivid example of this situation was the speech of Sir Kingsley Wood, the Air Minister, in the House of Commons, in which he revealed a change in the ratio of British fighting planes to bombers, which change was all too evidently decided upon with a view to the actual subordination of the British air fleet to that of Germany. The point after being seized upon by the *Daily Worker* and poohpoohed for several days by "respectable" commentators was then suddenly admitted as valid alike in the *Manchester Guardian* and the *Daily Telegraph.*

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Equally impressive was the steady refusal of the Chamberlain Government to indicate any of those drastic steps for the control and direction of the armament industry which virtually all naval, military and aviation experts declared to be essential if the huge sums being raised from the British people for armament purposes were to be put to any other use than the enrichment of gangs of profiteers.

The position in this respect is peculiarly instructive because you have here a complete coincidence of interest and policy between those who oppose such control because they have been warned from Berlin that it would be disagreeable to Hitler and might thus imperil the vote-catching possibilities of the " appeasement " illusion, and those who oppose it quite simply on the grounds that it would involve interference with the " right " of the capitalist to waste and steal money raised ostensibly for the public defence.

The refusal of the control of the armament industry was accompanied by a drive for the control and compulsion of armament—and other—labour, which by mid-November had developed in an open and much more ferocious renewal of the early summer's attack upon Trade Union rights, and indeed upon the whole existence of the Trade Unions.

It was futile for military and industrial " experts " to denounce the " irrelevance " of this drive to the real problems of armament supply. For such denunciations in the main missed the dark core of the real situation.

They missed the central point, that is to say, of the attempted alliance between Chamberlain and the Fascist Powers. For that attempted alliance is an attempt at alliance between fascist forces against democratic forces which does not miraculously or "patriotically" stop short at the attempted destruction of democracy in Spain, China, or Czechoslovakia, but involves in the most concrete sense, an attack also upon the democratic forces in Britain. Therefore the refusal of serious control of the armament industry, the refusal to " annoy " Berlin, the proposals for the alteration of the Air Force ratios, and the simultaneous intensification of the attack upon Trade Union rights and upon other democratic liberties, are part and parcel, inseparable sections, of the same policy.

Hitler at Saarbruecken, and Gayda later in his attacks upon France, made the whole thing perfectly clear. Democrats, popular forces, popular movements, working class parties, the Communist party, are all fully recognised as the " muscles " of the Western democratic powers, the forces which have the capacity to enable them to resist as Spain and China resist, and not to collapse as Czechoslovakia collapsed, without firing a shot. Hence they are the targets of attack. Hence it is demanded of the subservient Chamberlains and Daladiers, the would-be allies of Fascism, that these forces be attacked and weakened : in other words, that the muscles of the democracies be hamstrung.

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After the Fifteenth Communist Congress

A Programme of Economic Security

BY JOHN KNIGHT

NO DAY PASSES without a more or less veiled threat against the working class, its living conditions, its democratic rights, and its institutions. Members of the Government and the Press demand sacrifices from everybody—but the concrete proposals of sacrifices pertain only to the masses of the people.

We know what " everybody " means. If " everybody " is to benefit, everybody means the ruling class. If " everybody " is to sacrifice something, everybody means the masses of the people.

Cabinet ministers, supporters of the Government in industry and trade, in Parliament and official positions speak already to-day openly about difficulties ahead in maintaining the present standard of living, in avoiding " inroads upon the social services," in meeting the alleged shortage of skilled labour, in finding money for armaments without an increase in taxes on the masses of the people.

A general onslaught on labour is planned, and not only planned : it is under way already. Great Britain is not fascist yet—far from it. But the Government is paving the way for fascism, it is working on pro-fascist lines.

In such a time labour needs more than ever a clear-cut programme and—what is at least as important and without which the programme is of little value—proposals as to how to achieve what it wants. Labour needs a programme of goals as well as a programme of action.

Such a programme of goals and of action for economic security the Communist Party has given at its recent Congress.

In his report to the 15th Congress of the Communist Party of Great Britain Harry Pollitt developed a programme of economic security :

> In the first place, the organised and unorganised workers can strike a heavy blow against the economic crisis by not only standing firm against wage cuts—which have already begun—but by making a definite forward movement for higher wages for all who are below the subsistence level ; especially in regard to women and juvenile and the lower paid sections generally.
>
> To raise wages and protect existing rates means increasing purchasing power, and makes things easier for the shopkeepers and farmers.
>
> We must campaign for lower prices and rents, for the lightening of burdens on small incomes, and stop tax evasions by the rich.

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We should force the abolition of the Means Test and insist on real help to the depressed areas, and the carrying out of large scale schemes of building—houses, schools, hospitals, playing fields, welfare clinics, maternity clinics—and other constructive works of social value to the health and well-being of the people.

In no sphere is organised advance and assistance more urgent than in agriculture and fishing, which are now being deliberately held back. We must insist on State help being given to the actual producers instead of the middlemen and monopolists ; raise the level of production and give more employment and better conditions in these industries.

All this can be achieved only by *United Action.* And if it is achieved it means not only an improvement in the living conditions of the people, a new and important step forward towards social security, but it means at the same time a check to the economic crisis which is developing and a definite check to the growing menace of " pure and simple " monopoly government, that is fascism.

Similar programmes have been put before the Labour Movement often enough during the last hundred years. But never has their realisation been as important as to-day. For formerly their non-fulfilment meant that there was no progress in the Labour Movement, that the position of the ruling class continued to be economically sound and profitable. To-day failure to fulfil such a programme would not only mean continued deterioration of labour conditions—it would also strengthen the position of that section of the ruling class which is the most reactionary, the most ruthlessly exploiting section, which heads straight for fascism, *for destruction of the trade unions, and of all labour organisations.*

How can we realise this programme ? What must we do to be able to realise it ? Take the first two paragraphs of the programme and always keep in mind that we can achieve this programme only by United Action.

We must stand firm against wage cuts which already have begun and which will be attempted on a much larger scale in the near future, and at the same time we must take the offensive, especially in cases when wages are below the subsistence level. This will be a blow against the economic crisis and at the same time it will help the shopkeepers and farmers.

Nobody can deny that this is true, and nobody can say that this is difficult to understand if it is explained in simple language. If the purchasing power of the workers is kept up, then at least the industries producing consumer goods can sell their products, and if the purchasing power of those who receive wages below the subsistence level increases then these industries can produce even more. The crisis in the industries producing consumption goods at least receives a definite check ; they do not need to dismiss workers. At the same time the sales of the small retailers and shopkeepers do not decline ; they may even increase their sales.

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But if all this is so simple and clear, why have the employers so often succeeded in cutting wages ? The reason is that all this is clear to those who have thought about it and who have had the help of those who have thought about it and explained it to them. But there are millions who do not realise the simple truth because they have never had the situation explained to them in a simple way. And the second reason is, that there is a truly appalling difference in present-day society between realising the truth and being able to act accordingly.

What does it help the small shopkeeper if he knows that in the factory X the workers are striking against a wage cut, and that if they succeed in warding off the wage cut he will be able to sell to them as much as before ?—and often he does not even know that much, for in the capitalist papers he reads that if there is no wage cut all the workers have to be dismissed and then they won't get any wages.

The American trade union movement has made the following experiment in a number of small strikes fought in recent years. When the workers in a small factory town had decided upon a strike they approached the shopkeepers individually through their union representatives (occasionally also an existing organisation of the small shopkeepers as a whole) and explained to them that they would go on strike against a wage cut, that if they won this would keep business up, but if they lost the turnover of the small shop keepers would go down rapidly. They proposed to the shopkeepers that they should help them to win the strike extending credit facilities to the utmost during the strike, and that the union would see that their members paid back their debts. And often the shopkeepers acted together with the trade unions.

Here is an example of united action between workers and shopkeepers against a wage cut. Of course, it is not possible to follow it exactly in this manner always and under all circumstances. But it shows one of many ways of united action between the workers and a large group of the lower middle class against attempts of the employers to lower the standard of living of both of them by striking against one of them, the workers. Here also is an example how a united front, a mass front, a people's front is born out of action—united action. It is, of course, possible to achieve a people's front by arrangement before action, but only after many, many smallest scale " people's fronts " have been formed through united action. What we must realise is, that the people's front has to be built up at once, and not somewhere far away from us but at the spot where we are, and through common action. The attack against wages, our offensive for higher wages for the lowest paid workers will provide hundreds and thousands of such spots where we can start to build the people's front through united action.

The example of the co-operation between the shopkeepers and the workers is only one of many. The same policy of united action can be followed in mixed agricultural-industrial districts between the farmers

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and the workers. And here as well as in the case of the shopkeepers the co-operation in the single issue of wording off a wage cut or fighting for a wage increase must be used to penetrate the ideological armour which the capitalist press and propaganda has thrown around the farmer and the shopkeeper. From united talk about a single issue to united action on a single issue, to united talk on the large issues of the party's general economic policy, to a people's front: that is the way which we must go and which it is not difficult to follow if we start with a concrete issue.

The third paragraph of the economic security programme indicates even larger possibilities of united action of the most varied groups of the masses of the people. Lower rents and lower taxes are aims which unite all the workers and the lower bourgeoisie. It should not be difficult to form numerous house and estate tenants' committees. If the workers can form trade unions, why should the tenants, workers, shopkeepers, small government employees, clerks, etc., not form a tenants' union for each estate or house, and why should these tenants' unions in one street, or in one district, not come together and deliberate on common policy and action. As a rule the tenants cannot all be evicted together; their power, if united, is often greater than that of the workers in a factory because mass eviction is considerably more difficult than the closing of a factory. The strike for higher wages which joins together the workers and the small shopkeepers and the farmers should have its parallel in the strike of the tenants which joins together the same and many additional groups.

The fourth paragraph of the programme of economic security touches on the gigantic problem of public works. Public works in the interest of the masses of the people, public works which on the one hand absorb the unemployed and which on the other hand are of value to the masses of the people, public works which do not employ at shameful rates the unemployed and which do not consist in the erection of golf clubs for the rich! What a magnificent programme for united action, and how different in many respects from the aforementioned ones. Can the workers of a factory and the shopkeepers of the neighbourhood come together and start united action for a public works programme? What action should they take? Here a different method is required. For the ways to united action for economic security are manifold and require a careful study.

One method of getting a public works programme under way is to work through the local authorities. Again it is work on the spot which is required. The local Labour Party, the local Communist Party, the local Liberal Party, and any other progressive local association must get together to work out a programme of public works for the specific locality. Mass meetings must be organised to bring such a programme to the attention of the whole of the local population. But if one cannot get these organisations together to work out such a programme, then

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the local trade union body or any other local labour organisation must start to work out such a programme ; and after the programme has been tentatively worked out it is necessary to try through the most varied ways of agitation and propaganda to bring it to the attention of the masses. Once it has got through to the masses then all other organisations being dependent upon mass support will be much more ready to join in the campaign. In this way united action for local public works programmes can and must be initiated.

The final paragraph of this programme deals with the help which agriculture and fishing need. State help is asked for them, and State help requires the most widespread form of united action. State help requires large scale organisation of an opposition movement. But here, too, a beginning must be made on the spot ; a programme must be developed by the small farmers, by the agricultural workers, and by the organisations of the industrial population which puts forward the demands in such a way that it must be clear to everybody that everybody will gain from these demands (except the trusts and monopolies and the large middlemen), while under present conditions everybody loses but a few at the top.

It will be necessary to deal in the very near future much more extensively with the above programme of economic security in all our labour literature. This is a first attempt and is designed as an introduction giving some broad outlines. But however we deal with the economic security problem, whatever aspects of this programme we may discuss, to whatever audience we speak or write, certain features of this programme have to be brought out clearly again and again.

The programme of economic security can be realised only by united action. United action is the first step to a united front and to a people's front ; the united front and the people's front is formed through united action. United action can best be commenced in support of a concrete programme or issue. A strike against wage cuts, for a wage increase, for a lowering of the rent, etc., can be the occasion for united action, can be the starting point of a united front and of a people's front.

This emphasis on the concreteness of the issue requires on the other hand a great aliveness of the local labour organisations to the problems in their locality, requires a considerable initiative on their side and absolute clearness about the necessity of and the way to a people's front through united action.

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The Trade Unions and the Peoples' Movement

BY GEORGE RUDE

As has been previously argued in the columns of the Labour Monthly,

> A successful struggle against Chamberlain demands the co-operation of all sections of the people and of all organisations that are alarmed and discontented with his policy.

In such a common struggle, what should and can be the rôle of the great Trade Union Movement in Britain? It is both clear that no common movement of the people of this country can be effective without the active co-operation and leadership of the Labour Movement and that in the Labour Movement itself the decisive rôle must be played by the trade unions.

This has not only been true since Munich, but the Munich "Settlement" and its aftermath have made this doubly urgent and imperative and laid a firmer basis for the active co-operation of the organised workers with those other sections of the people whose interests are threatened by the pro-fascist policy of the Government at home and abroad. Munich faces the trade unions with new tasks and with the need for greater vigilance and closer unity. Consequent upon the Government's concessions to Fascism and the deliberate strengthening of Hitler's economic position by Chamberlain, the economic crisis is deepening and open attempts are now being made to throw the whole burden of sacrifice on to the backs of the workers in the form of lower wages and rising unemployment. The Government's rearmament plans, though they are not calculated to provide adequate defence for the people of Britain, throw fresh burdens on the workers and threaten to take away old-established customs of trade unionism and to encroach upon their rights of organisation. Social services, wages, trade union rights, security of employment, health, are all increasingly menaced in this situation.

At the same time, other sections of the people are severely affected. Middle class and professional people are beginning to realise the discrepancy between higher taxation and prices to pay for rearmament and growing national insecurity; they too are anxious about the education of their children, higher rents and bad housing. Small business men, shopkeepers and farmers are worried by the Government's

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economic and agricultural policy and the threat of bankruptcy with which mass impoverishment and unemployment will face them.

The Oxford by-election has already shown how this feeling of discontent can be harnessed and what vigour such a popular movement can develop when the trade unions and Labour parties are even partially drawn into the common struggle. How much more vital will this struggle become when not only locally but nationally, the trade union movement realises the urgent need to steel the Labour Movement to take the lead in a broad nation-wide people's movement against Chamberlain and monopoly capitalism !

But this, it must be emphasised, can only develop out of the day to day struggle in which the people are involved. The conception of this people's movement is not an abstract slogan or a manœuvre to draw the trade union and Labour movement into some new and artificial political alliance against their own best and immediate interests. The organisation of the People's Front with its joint programme of demands is still a matter for the future, but the people's movement out of which it will develop, that movement that grows out of the daily needs of factory workers and trade unionists and their potential allies in other classes of society, is as old as the working class itself, and goes on day to day. But it is weak and disunited and without effective leadership. It must be strengthened, developed and co-ordinated. To-day, the trade unions in particular are faced with that responsibility—not only to save themselves but to save the people of Britain. Can they assume this responsibility that history places upon their shoulders ?

The six million-strong British Trade Union Movement has unquestionably the organisational and numerical strength and experience to undertake such a national rôle. But the direction in which the dominant section of the leadership is at present trying to lead the movement, the serious decisions and lack of clarity on essential problems facing the working class are serious obstacles to a consistent policy of struggle against Chamberlain and Fascism. The weaknesses in the movement to-day have already been dealt with in detail by J. R. Campbell and other writers in the LABOUR MONTHLY. *Here it is necessary to emphasise, first of all, that the same weaknesses which held the movement back on such questions as wages, shorter hours and trade union unity, are essentially the same as those which prevent the movement from giving a more positive lead to the developing people's movement against Chamberlain. These are not two separate questions—but part and parcel of the same central issue.* It was the ability of the French Trade Union Movement in June, 1936, to lead the great struggle in the factories for higher wages, paid holidays, and the 40-hour week, which enabled them to give working class leadership to the People's Front.

Secondly, it is important to consider the main weaknesses in the movement that are holding the trade unions back from a more effective struggle inside and outside the factories and to point to the only way

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in which they can be overcome.

The reactionary core of leaders who quite wilfully held the movement back on all essential issues are certainly not the central problem, but it is necessary to see how they are able to operate to-day. As their aim at the present time is rather to co-operate with Chamberlain and his class than to fight them, it is only natural that they should try to prevent any action whatsoever, either of the working class itself or of the workers and their allies. This explains their opposition to not only " political," but " industrial " action, and to any organised expression of opinion of the unemployed. These things would naturally " embarrass " Chamberlain and the employing class, whose good graces they wish to win. This is why, under the guidance of Citrine, the General Council of the T.U.C. declared on March 25th (two days after Citrine's visit to Downing Street saved Chamberlain at the time of the Austria crisis) that in dealing with any Government on behalf of the Trade Union Movement, its conduct must be determined by industrial and not *political* considerations—thus splitting the whole Labour Movement at a most critical period for Chamberlain. That is why the same core of leaders refused to sanction the calling of an emergency conference on Spain, in spite of insistent demands by miners, engineers and railwaymen, on the pretext (given by Citrine at Blackpool) that such a Congress would have to discuss *industrial* action for *political* ends—which would be unlawful under the Trade Disputes Act of 1927. This is why the spirit of the good paper resolution on the need for co-operation between Britain, France and the Soviet Union for the protection of Czechoslovakia was nullified, not only by subsequent inaction, but by the very active steps taken to keep the Soviet Unions out of the International Federation. This again is why, when the temper of Congress is such that militant resolutions as that on Arms for Spain cannot be effectively opposed, every attempt is made to see that they are not operated. This, further, is why no attempt is made to co-ordinate the wages movement, or the drive for the 40-hour week, and why Charles Dukes, General Secretary of the Municipal and General Workers' Union, writing in this month's issue of the Union Journal, throws confusion into the minds of the workers by calling for an international conference of " have " and " have-not " Powers to give Hitler his equal right to colonial plunder. And these are the self-same leaders who joined hands with the " r-r-r-revolutionaries " on the " extreme left " to castigate the Peace Alliance and the People's Front, as attempts to sacrifice the best principles of Socialism !

But why is the opposition to such a policy not more effective ? It is clear that such a policy could not be put across in the name of the trade union movement, if the leadership were constantly and consistently pressed in *another direction* by a strong and united movement continually active *on all fronts of the struggle.* This demands greater unity, clarity and purpose among the mass of the membership. Have

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we not the example of France, where certain Left Wing leaders, who *before* June, 1936, were classed with the Citrines and the Bevins, now lead a movement, united not only at the top, but in every factory and branch ? And in 1921, it was not the British trade union leaders, but the French and the Spanish, who led the movement against international trade union unity. For, while it is true that the reactionary core of leaders help to maintain the divisions in the movement and thus to hold it back from effective action against the wishes of all that is best in the trade unions, it is equally true that this can only happen because even among the most militant and the staunchest opponents of such a policy there is often confusion and a lack of clarity on the singleness of the struggle in its various aspects and phases—a serious tendency to separate " industrial " from " political " issues, to take sides for the trade unions *against* the Labour Party, or to fail to see the common basis of struggle between the workers and their allies in other classes of the population.

Thus in 1937 we find a militant leader of the Miners' Federation of Great Britain taking a lead in opposing the demands of the Divisional Labour Parties for greater representation and powers to elect their own nominees on to the National Executive of the Labour Party before the Bournemouth Conference. Again among the dockers, who in the ports of London, Southampton and Liverpool, gave a magnificent lead to the whole country by refusing to load Japanese ships last year, there were thousands and there are thousands who neglect to build up and strengthen their trade unions by attending their branches and by participating in union elections. We find members of the Amalgamated Engineering Union, who have been active militants all their lives, opposing the organisation of women in their ranks ; in other unions hostility to the youth or to the semi-skilled, and in others, again, sectionalism carried to the extent of opposing the wages or hours claims of fellow workers in the belief that a forward movement by one section of workers may weaken the chances of another. Similarly, we found last summer, how many of the best and staunchest fighters in the Movement had been swayed by the arguments put forward by extreme reactionary leaders, that the Peace Alliance and the People's Front entailed a sacrifice of Socialism. This was revealed in the discussion that took place on this issue in the major trade union conferences, and by the fact that not one of the unions catering for workers in the great basic industries that built up the Labour Party and, after the initial successes at Easter and Whitsun, not one of the great trade unions in the country carried a motion in favour of the Peace Alliance—including Unions which had two years previously returned large majorities for Communist Affiliation to the Labour Party. And again, this included the Amalgamated Engineering Union (though only by the Chairman's casting vote), which had led the campaign against Chamberlain after Austria by refusing to collaborate on the production

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of arms with a pro-Fascist Government, and the Miners' Federation which, together with the A.E.U., had led the campaign on behalf of Spanish democracy. The Electrical Trades Union quite clearly showed that it considered the Peace Alliance as something quite different from working-class unity as its conference carried an amendment excluding the Peace Alliance, but advocating unity of the workers' forces.

How can these confusions, which help to perpetuate the present divisions and fail to influence the dominant core of reactionary leaders in the direction of united struggle, be overcome ? The solution lies in both more and more *discussion* and clarification inside the movement and (more important still by far) more and more *unity in action*, that alone begets lasting experience and understanding.

Lenin pointed to the great responsibility of the political parties of the working-class for the education of the industrial workers in the class-struggle, when he explained that we should represent

> the working-class not in relation to a given group of employees, but in relation to all classes in modern society, to the State as an organised political force.

The class struggle, as Lenin so often explained, is fought out on a multiplicity of fronts. It draws the workers and other classes in society into a common struggle, both on economic or so-called " narrow trade union " issues and also on broader political and international issues—but all these issues, industrial, political, local and international, are not divorced from one another, but are all part and parcel of one single struggle against the main enemy, in which not only the workers but hundreds and thousands of middle class and professional people can be involved as their allies to their mutual advantage. And this realisation will spring in the minds of trade unionists, not from political generalities, but from the everyday experiences and needs of the workers at home and at work.

Such understanding will be helped to develop by constant discussion in the factories and trade union branches. But arguments in favour of developing the people's movement must be based not only on the experiences of the working class abroad (for example, in Germany, France or Spain), but also on the experiences of the British workers themselves. Every worker who has taken part in a strike knows how necessary it is to win the support of the public and to take advantage of every rift in the employers' ranks, even to the extent of forming a temporary alliance with one section of them, to win through. The British workers were able to build up their trade unions and win legal rights and protection of funds by temporary support from one section of the ruling class against the other, inside and outside Parliament. In the same way they won their vote in 1867 by joining forces with the Radicals in Bright's Reform League, as advocated by Marx himself. Again, the East London dockers of the great Dockers' Strike of 1889, *led by Socialists*, won the co-operation and active support of middle-class

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sections of the public, including the Catholic Archbishop of Westminster and Journalists like T. P. O'Connor. Similarly, do not passenger transport workers, when engaged in disputes with employers like the London Passenger Transport Board, H. Tilling's or the Railway Companies, seek the support of the travelling public, who, like themselves, are the victims of monopoly capital? These are simple examples of the people's movement in action, examples such as every trade unionist would recognise as being in the best interests of trade unionism.

As has been pointed out already, discussion alone is only likely to convince the most advanced workers in the trade union movement—conviction for the mass can only come from the experience gained in the struggle, that is by *action*. In France, the Popular Front developed into a national movement drawing the workers and their allies into organisational unity at first through local joint activity, often sporadic in character. The town workers were able to lead in the alliance with the peasants and town middle classes because they were faced with the same threats of Fascism from the 200 Families *and because the workers were strong and united.*

It is certain that nothing will attract the middle sections of the population more to common action with the workers than the knowledge that the Labour Movement is strong and united, and is continually and persistently advancing the interests of the working class. Therefore, we can say that the *key to the leadership of the trade unions in the people's movement against Chamberlain, and to the very existence of the movement itself, lies in the unity of action of the trade unions both inside and outside the Labour Party on each and every issue that confronts the workers* and, wherever possible, in drawing their allies in other sections of the people into this struggle.

Working-class unity is not only an organisational political conception. It does not only mean Communist Affiliation or the repeal of the Black Circular. In the workshop it means 100 per cent. trade unionism and joint shop stewards committees. Inside the trade unions, it means the ending of sectionalism in such great national organisations as the Transport and General Workers' Union (for example, the merging of the London Central busmen, tramwaymen and Green Line busmen into one section). Between unions, it means joint action on matters of common concern and amalgamation of separate unions into one union for every industry. In the circumstances prevailing to-day, this means particularly, joint action by the railway and engineering unions on their outstanding claims, and the creation of one national union for the miners. Internationally, it means real international trade union unity by the inclusion of the 23,000,000 trade unionists of the Soviet Union in the I.F.T.U. Yet again, it means drawing the unemployed into constant co-operation with the employed workers by the creation of one national united organisation for the

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Unemployed under the Trades Union Congress.

To-day, such unity needs to be translated into immediate joint action on the most urgent issues facing the workers. We have already seen how Munich has intensified the problems facing the trade unions. Co-ordination of the extensive movement for wage increases and shorter hours is now a matter of the greatest urgency before increasing unemployment and trade decline weaken the trade union position. Railwaymen, cotton operatives, engineers, postal workers, transport workers and dockers all have outstanding claims for wage increases, which are being held up or being threatened with counter-claims by the employers. Other sections of workers, such as builders and miners, are at present held back from advancing demands for wages increases by the operation of "tie-up" clauses in their agreements which restrict their ability to bargain. Miners, railwaymen and engineers are negotiating for shorter hours. Others, including cotton operatives, are demanding holidays with pay. There is a widespread movement among the women and youths for a minimum wage. In the effective co-ordination of these various movements, locally and nationally, lies the first immediate step towards drawing the whole trade union movement together, ready to meet the offensive that is being prepared by Chamberlain and the financial and industrial magnates.

Such joint trade union action to meet the immediate economic demands, if developing into large-scale strike action, could in itself provide a basis for co-operation with other sections of the people, who are also faced with economic insecurity owing to the Government's policy. Take, for instance, the passenger transport industry, where the travelling public can clearly be shown that their sympathies should be with the unions, if the position is carefully explained to them. At the same time, it is equally clear that these unions need the co-operation of the public to help them solve the problems now facing them. The much "watered" (monopoly) capital of the railway companies and the London Passenger Transport Board tries to exact its toll of interest not only by exploiting the railwaymen, busmen and tramwaymen, but by robbing the travelling public of their rights to better travelling facilities and cheaper fares (*e.g.*, the raising of fares by 5 per cent. on the railways in 1937, and the L.P.T.B.'s recent notification to the Ministry of Transport that it intends to raise fares by $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. in the London area). Unity of employees and public is therefore of immediate advantage to both. Such unity will not be won by such statements as that of the Chairman of the Railway Clerks' Association, when he declared at the union 1937 conference that he welcomed the Railway Companies' decision to apply for permission to raise fares to the travelling public in the belief that the money so saved would be devoted to meeting the claims of the railway employees. The shortsightedness of this policy has been revealed this autumn, when it has become clear that the railway companies are far more

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interested in maintaining the profitability of their "watered" capital than of meeting the requirements of their employees or the public—for now, having fleeced the public by charging the additional 5 per cent., they are already threatening to "cut down labour costs." The policy of the L.P.T.B. is quite similar and forces its employees, variously organised in the Transport and General Workers' Union, the Railway unions and a host of engineering unions, to find a co-ordinated policy of resistance that will draw in the London public. It is on such issues that the trade unions can immediately be brought into the leadership of a real people's movement.

But these are not the only issues that provide such a basis of co-operation. We have already seen how the engineering unions, led by the A.E.U., refused to consider the question of co-operation with the Chamberlain Government as a purely *industrial* issue (in spite of the recommendations of the General Council) and, by this refusal, gave a *political* lead not only to the Labour Movement but to all those wavering elements, not organised in the trade unions or co-operatives and not belonging to any political party, who are working for a determined and consistent lead against Chamberlain. In the same way, it will be in the immediate interest of the building workers, miners and engineers if their unions give a lead to the whole people for their proper protection against air attack by the construction of underground tunnels and shelters at trade union rates and conditions. In effectively doing so, they would not only safeguard their own members' rights and give beneficial employment to hundreds and thousands of unemployed workers, but win the active co-operation of millions of people outside the Labour Movement who are vitally affected and rightly indignant about the present state of affairs under Chamberlain.

Similarly, the building trades unions can win *popular* support for a campaign for better housing, rent control and the restriction of profiteering and jerry-building. Besides transport, A.R.P., housing, there are questions such as the reorganisation of every industry in the interests of the people and at the expense of the large shareholders and banks—here again the unions and masses of the people would be drawn together in a common struggle, not only nationally through the executives of the unions and the political parties, but locally through the Trades Councils, Tenants' Associations and Local Government bodies.

These are day-to-day, "bread-and-butter" issues, but such as immediately affect not only the workers in industry, but their allies amongst the masses of the people. There is no radical point of separation between them and the broader political issues with which any popular movement would be faced—but the Popular Front must be built up on such a basis of day-to-day struggle and activity and for this the key lies in a strong, united trade union movement.

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Housing Rents in Scotland

BY BERNARD McCOURT

THERE IS NO valid, simple comparison between housing conditions in Scotland and in England, despite the fact that much recent legislation has attempted to deal with both countries simultaneously. There is a difference which may be expressed in figures, but the remedy for the evil requires something more from Scottish authorities than a proportionate increase in effort. Here are the figures concisely reported in " A Plan for Scotland " by Thomas Burns.

> All his life, whether in work or out of it, it is an even chance that the ordinary Scotsman will have to live in a slum or semi-slum, cooped up in one or two small dark rooms with others who may not even be members of his own family, and sharing the same drab lavatory at the stair-head with half-a-dozen other families. Six Scotsmen are condemned to live in overcrowded slum conditions for every one Englishman. Almost a third of the population of Scotland are living in overcrowded, slum conditions, more than two in a room. 300,000 houses in the Burghs alone are without a separate water closet, that is over a quarter of 1,146,852 inhabited Scots dwelling houses. With the villages it amounts to fully one-third. In Glasgow alone 30,000 families are living four families sharing a water closet and 4,638 single room houses are occupied by four or more persons, while 9,786 two-room houses are occupied by six or more persons.

Such is the extent of the problem expressed in numbers, but there is a qualitative difference in the remedies. These overcrowded conditions arise from inadequate housing mainly in tenements, usually four storey buildings with twelve families on the stair. Edinburgh has been credited with the record of 157 persons up one stair—the fact that the stair goes up rather than down alone distinguishes the building from a rabbit warren. Glasgow has miles of these and in one clearance less than one quarter of the previous house dwellers could be rehoused in the area cleared.

In the early post-war years it was obvious that building by private enterprise could not deal with the arrears of house building or of modernising the slum heritage of capitalist development. The first assisted house building took place under the Addison Act of 1919, from which Scotland has received 25,129 houses built by Local Authorities and 2,745 built by private builders. (It must be remembered that private contractors made fortunes out of local authority contracts. These houses were not built by direct labour.)

The Government provided the money to build the houses and the

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local bodies repaid amounts equal to $\frac{4}{5}$ of a penny on the rates as their share of the burden. Rents were fixed by reference to the boom prices of 1919, and these high rents have exerted an upward pull on all later rents. They set the pace, but even at this height housing did not pay. So came the Chamberlain Act of 1923 as an attempt to get houses built again for profit.

Now Local Authorities intending to build had to find the money and Chamberlain relieved the Government (and rich taxpayers) of much of their burden. A subsidy of £6 per house was to be paid for 20 years, and the ratepayers contributed half of this sum.

Under this Act, there have been built 20,981 houses by local authorities and 29,549 by private builders, who thus found Chamberlain 11 times as profitable as Addison. But it was obvious that working-class houses would never come and the first Labour Government passed the 1924 Act. This attempt, engineered by John Wheatley, was the first successful attempt to solve the problem and its record of 75,253 houses by local authorities stands to this day. Private builders did not find it quite so useful, having built only 8,207 houses under its provisions. Despite their long period in office, the Tories did not see fit to disturb John Wheatley's schemes, but in 1930 the second Labour Government allowed Greenwood to pass the slum clearance provisions, under which 46,168 houses have been built by local authorities. Up to 1937 only one house in every eight has been built by Neville Chamberlain's financial genius—the answer to the private contractor's prayer.

Under this Act of 1930 a direct inducement was given to local authorities to rehouse large families living in overcrowded conditions. A subsidy of £2 10s. was paid annually for each person rehoused. As the average family in Scotland (1931 census) has between 3 and 4 children, the average subsidy paid was a little over £12.

This subsidy, coinciding, as it did, with falling building costs allowed local authorities to build houses at relatively cheap rentals without in most cases having to make any charge on rates. But three years later came the second Chamberlain Act, surely the most irresponsible piece of legislation ever passed. In 1933 the subsidy for ordinary housing which stood at £9 was cut to £3. This cut was so divorced from practical politics that less than 500 houses were built—less than one per cent. of what Wheatley could accomplish with Councils which hated him and all he stood for.

Curiously enough Mr. Chamberlain had improved on his 1923 attempt to help private building rings. Now he stopped all local authority housing to meet normal growth of population. The paltry assistance was restricted to relief of overcrowding, slum clearance and very limited town planning. Nothing to meet population movements, nothing to provide homes for married couples. By this means presumably the usual process of slow starvation would give rents the inevitable upward kick and again private builders would be able

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to fill their pockets.

By 1935 it was obvious that this Act was hopeless, so the Chamberlain genius found expression in a new type of subsidy. The £3 subsidy was increased to £6 15s. per house. This was admitted to be inadequate, but the tracks were covered up by making a pool of all rents. Rents were to be standardised, the little benefit of Labour's housing campaigns was to be used to meet high costs without further subsidy. In almost every case the process of standardisation of rents means scaling up the slum clearance rents to cover the loss caused by inadequate subsidies. Surely of all classes who should bear the burden of housing slum-clearance tenants can least afford the charge. They have already faced the task of refurnishing a larger house, are generally further removed from work and have increased rents, all of which comes inevitably out of the food budget. (Dr. McGonigle's research at Stockton-on-Tees proves this up to the hilt.)

Obviously, the Labour Party has displayed the better conception of how to meet Scotland's housing needs. The method can only be by adequate subsidies and State control of building costs (which Wheatley also tried to introduce unsuccessfully in 1924). It is necessary to show what part subsidies play in fixing rents, but before doing so it is wise to explain one fundamental difference between Scottish and English rating. In England, rates which are paid entirely by the tenant in Scotland are divided between tenant and landlord in roughly equal shares.

Thus if the amount of rates to be paid on a house be £10 :—

	England	Scotland
Rent of house	20	25
Rates paid by tenant ..	10	5
Cost to tenant ..	30	30

The Scottish landlord would pay £5 in rates and be left with £20. Only the amount of rates per £ are altered (apart from property tax). In England the rate would be 10s. per £, in Scotland 8s. per £ with 4s. payable by owner and 4s. by occupier. But obviously the tenant pays all the rates.

Here then is how subsidies affect rents. The rent must be enough to cover the cost of building—say of a three-apartment flatted type costing £300. There will be an annual charge for interest and a sum to be set aside each year to repay the loan.

	£
This debt charge will amount to.. ..	14
If the annual subsidy is	9
The amount of charge against rent is..	5
Add owners' rates at 6s. 8d.	5
Repairs, Insurance, etc.	4
Rent	£14

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So, when the tenant pays over £15 in the year one third is required to pay owner's rates and one third to keep up repairs, pay insurance, supervision, rent collection, etc.—and one third goes to meet the debt charges. If the rate of interest rises or the cost of building the house rises, then the rent will rise nearly three times as fast.

Chamberlain cut the subsidy by £6 and it is easy to show that a rent of from £25 to £30 must now be charged. The old rent is almost doubled. Unfortunately the chance of shoving part of this burden on to the rates was lost because Chamberlain's pals were busy grabbing the main chance. Armaments were beginning to set the rate of profit and building prices soared. Hence only 494 houses under the 1933 Act and the building stagnation of 1936/37. In this period within nine months prices for a standard type of house rose from £300 to £430. Questioned in the House of Commons about this rise, the Secretary of State for Scotland was compelled to admit that it arose from a 6 per cent. wage increase and about 60 per cent. scramble. The whole rent policy of the National Government is "scramble" since the "scramblers" are the rings, the monopolists and the building contractors. 60 per cent. of £130 is £78 per house additional profit—to come out of the pockets and bellies of rehoused slum dwellers who were nearly getting a chance to live.

What of the reception such a brazen policy is meeting. Objection in every area; Fife, Kilsyth, loss of a labour majority caused by supporting the increased rents; Renfrewshire has demonstrated its opposition. The Labour Party seem to be unaware of their record in housing; there is a lack of co-ordination among Labour Councillors who in one area are scaling up and, five miles away, are fighting tooth and nail. Again the leadership of the Labour Party has shown that to keep its nose to the grindstone of heresy hunting, black circulars and shaking off militants means to be confused and bewildered in its campaigns. Here is a campaign to sweep the country, spontaneous movements have already compelled Councils to withdraw proposals. The line of Addison, Wheatley (above all) and Greenwood will not be defended by Councillors timidly moving amendments which accept the principle of high rents. "Scale them up, but not so far" is a desertion of the leaders of the Labour Movement who brought it respect. Subsidies must be provided and control of prices instituted; then with an admission of priority to Council building schemes progress can be recommenced and the Labour Party in Scotland will advance as it did in the days of John Wheatley and William Graham.

Repudiation of a policy of Standardised Rents (which involve Rebates to meet upward scales) is evident in the local elections now proceeding. In the Town Councils returns show that the example of Kirkcaldy is typical of many areas. Labour suffered a serious reverse in Westwood's constituency, where a model scheme of compliance with a Tory rent policy became a muddled rent scheme. The County

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elections have still to be held and in many areas tenants have overcome Moderate monopolies. Candidates are going forward, particularly in Renfrewshire, a large and important County which has never had one elected left-wing Councillor. Although Labour is strong in the towns, it has remained weak in the rural areas until the adoption of a rent policy forced tenants to unite and defend their position.

A new Bill for Scottish Housing with enlarged subsidies is foreshadowed, and will be available by the time these notes are being read. The apparent subsidy proposed is a varying one, but still restricted in scope. Authorities are still prevented from building to meet ordinary growth or movements of population. Rehousing is not a complete housing programme, and even after years of stagnation, Chamberlain will not allow authorities to pass beyond the relief of slum-clearance and overcrowding. Here, as elsewhere, the line is drawn—relief is at a minimum.

At the present stage it is impossible to state whether local authorities will be encouraged to respond to mass pressure against scaled up rents. The Exchequer will be ready to take half of any surplus from housing and it is criminal that any Council should have so burdened slum clearance and overcrowded families that they earn the undying gratitude of Sir John Simon.

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The History of the Nineteenth Century

BY PROFESSOR E. TARLE

[*The following article is the first section of the Editor's Preface to a new Russian edition of the History of the Nineteenth Century by Lavisse and Rambeand, which is shortly to be issued.*]

IN THE MARCH of the centuries preceding the 20th, the history of the 19th century is of exceptional significance. For it was in the 19th century that economy, machinery and industry, science and literature, music and the plastic arts, developed with unprecedented vigour and rapidity. Unparalleled as well, were the sudden changes in the political structure of nations, the frequency of wars and revolutions, which changed the entire character of state life affecting the international relations of the European countries, and often drawing new national boundaries. It was the industrial bourgeoisie, who during the course of almost the entire 19th century, were the leading, the most dominating section of their class. And it was only in the last quarter of the 19th century that that finance capital began to crystalise, which was later to entrench itself and hold power so completely in the leading capitalist countries at the beginning of the 20th century. The 19th century provided all the prerequisites for the transition from the old forms of capitalism to monopolistic capitalism, the highest and last stage of the development of capitalism—to imperialism.

The bourgeoisie in the XIXth century led the struggle simultaneously on several fronts. Firstly, during the first half of the XIXth century, in those countries where on the road to their advancement stood the class of landlords and aristocracy which was connected in one way or another with the former feudal landowners, the bourgeoisie carried on a persistent struggle against them until they were defeated. Secondly, in those countries where by the beginning of the XIXth century state national unity was as yet not achieved, the bourgeoisie continued to carry on a struggle for this unity. The creation of large national states, wrote Engels, brought into being the only type of political structure normal for the ruling European bourgeoisie. The requirements of merchants and of industrialists urgently demanded the abolition of all kinds of provincial restrictions (variety of bills of exchange, the different rules for the right to engage in handicraft industry in districts situated only a few miles from each other, the variety of local legislation, residence restrictions, different weights and measures, variety in currencies, etc.), which hampered and limited trade.

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> Hence, it is evident that the tendency towards the united " fatherland " was based on an altogether materialistic foundation.*

The wars which led to the creation of the united Italy (1848, 1859, 1860 and 1866), to the creation of the German Empire (1864, 1866, 1870-1871) were the expressions of this " will for unity," which was so strong, above all, with the bourgeoisie of the above-mentioned countries. Thirdly, and finally, the bourgeoisie carried on a persistent struggle for its class domination over the classes of the population exploited by it, and above all against the industrial proletariat this struggle went on during the course of the entire XIXth century, becoming more and more acute with every passing decade.

The XIXth century was the century of the formation of the working class, the greatest progressive historical force in contemporary times, whose mission it is to do away with parasitic capitalism and to create a new social order, for whose ideals the most progressive people of the XIXth century fought and gave their lives.

The struggle of the proletariat as a class, for its special economic and political aims, which it fully perceived, composes the annals of the entire history of the XIXth century. This persistent struggle of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie was waged in different countries. It took on the most diverse forms, not always with equal force and assuming various aspects. It began with the first proletarian uprising in Lyons in November, 1831, with Chartism in England, then, through the persistent strike struggle in the times of Louis Philippe it developed further into the revolutionary battles in 1848, and from 1848 it went on to the First International and the Paris Commune. Then, from the Paris Commune, it contined through to the creation of the trade unions, the creation of political parties of the proletariat and the activity of the first years of the Second International. In the fire of this struggle all the political " values," all the universal achievements of mankind of which the bourgeoisie so eagerly boasted, were burnt without a trace.

> The type of the parliamentary democratic republic . . . . which used to be the most perfect and progressive one among the bourgeois states."†

was discarded by the bourgeoisie without the slightest hesitation, when the bourgeoisie understood after the revolution of 1848, that it was more profitable and safer for it to replace the republic by the semi-autocratic empire of Napoleon III. After the revolution of 1848 in Western Europe the bourgeoisie went over en masse to the side of reaction and entered into an alliance with the bureaucrats and monarchists, with the feudal lords and the church, the domination of which it had recently overthrown with the aid of the working class. Precisely in the same way, and in view of the same considerations, the German and Austrian bourgeoisie reconciled themselves very quickly and willingly to the establishment, after the events of 1848, of the semi-absolutism in Prussia and the return of complete absolutism in Austria. The

*Engels, *The Rôle of Violence in History.*
†Lenin, *Collected Works*, v. XX., p. 119 (Russian Edition).

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capitalist class was always ready, whenever its domination was seriously threatened, to repudiate any "liberties"—even all the civil rights—in favour of that dictatorship which promised decisive and ruthless suppression of the revolutionary proletariat. Fascism is the most brutal, the most shockingly depraved, the most brazenly barbarous form of all hitherto forms of bourgeois dictatorship which have been recorded by world history. Never before in the course of the entire XIXth century has the capitalist class realised to the extent that it does at the present time, that it is doomed to death and that its position is unusually precarious. And precisely because of this, at no time during the XIXth century, excepting periods of acute class struggle (as, for instance, at the time of the Paris Commune), had a bourgeois dictatorship established (especially for a period of many years) such a régime of mediæval tortures, horror chambers, a régime based on every conceivable kind of persecution of the defeated class, as has present-day fascism, which is based entirely on this form of repression. But this régime will last, undoubtedly, only up to a certain time.

The reader, in studying the culture of the XIXth century, will also notice further that at the times when the bourgeoisie felt especially acute the threat of the activity of the revolutionary proletariat, it became extremely reactionary in its intellectual life; it forgot then about Voltaire's traditions, about free-thinking in the sphere of religion, about its philosophic scepticism inherited from the XVIIIth century and turned back towards the church, the clergy, looking for support and protection. "Our enemy is not the village priest, but the socialist school teacher!" declared Thiers, Falloux and other representatives of the once free-thinking bourgeoisie frightened by the thunder of the 1848 revolution. This fear which was experienced by the bourgeoisie and which stimulated its alliance with the clericals did not leave it up to the end of the XIXth century. It was at that time that Paul Bourge, the most popular bourgeois belletrist of France in the nineties of the last century, and Ferdinand Brunetier, a famous critic, proclaimed that "science is bankrupt" and that religion is the only basis of individual morality and of society.

Nevertheless, even in the given case, during the whole XIXth century, this intellectual reaction did not dare to encroach on the creators of natural science, who by their great discoveries had undermined the basis of religious superstition. Darwin, Layelle, Huxley, Mendeleev, Sechenov, Helmholtz, Claud Bernard, Bertello, Mechnikov, Pasteur, performed their great services. Only at the present time, the fascists who have run amok also express in this sphere their panic-stricken fear, and try by every means possible to extinguish the light of free scientific research work. In the light of the outrageous deeds performed by Mussolini in Italy, by Hitler, Goebbels, Goering and Rosenberg in Germany, and by their zealous imitators in Hungary and in other countries, it becomes clear that the head of world moral reaction,

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the Pope Pius IX. who in 1864 pompously declared the main achievements of the scientific ideas of mankind to be " an error," would at the present time find a lively response and active assistance in the struggle against these " errors " of science in the fascist countries. Not without reason was the present Pope Pius XI. in a hurry to lift the ban from Mussolini's Italy, the ban which was imposed upon constitutional Italy in 1870 by Pius IX.

Thus we see that as far back as in the XIXth century there were outlined many things, both in the sphere of political and in the sphere of moral reaction which only at the present time have flourished to full bloom. And it is quite understandable, as in the last analysis the XIXth century proved to be the eve of the coming socialist revolutions on a world-wide scale, and if the bestial fury of modern fascism has been called forth by fear, then one has to acknowledge that there are undoubtedly all the foundations for this fear. In the times of Marx and Engels, this fear certainly could not be so acute, so panicky, so permanent, as is the case in the eras of Lenin and Stalin.

The XIXth century was a great historical school for the struggle of the working class in the process of which the theory of scientific socialism was elaborated and the forms of the economic and political organisation of the proletariat were advanced. At the end of the first half of the XIXth century the immortal teachings of Marx and Engels made their appearance. They gave the key to the understanding of the entire past and to the predictions of the future countries going through the process of capitalist development. The " Manifesto of the Communist Party " will remain for ever in the history of European thought, as one of the most profound analyses of all past history, and as a prediction for the future. This is true even if its authors had not written a number of highly gifted historical, economic and philosophic works later on on the theory of scientific socialism. There is the closest connection between the " Manifesto of the Communist Party," " Capital " and a number of scientific works by Marx and Engels on the history of mankind, beginning with primitive society and ending with the history of the revolutionary movements of 1848, the " coup d'état " on December 2, the Crimean War and the Paris Commune.

These scientific works of Marx and Engels left an indelible impression on the intellectual life of millions and millions of people and have directed the thought of entire generations of the proletariat and of all working people for new battles against the régime of oppressors exploiting them. The founding of the First International, inspired by Marx and Engels, became from the very inception of its organisation a brilliant illustration of the principal ideas expressed in the " Manifesto," of the idea of the unity of the proletariat for the struggle, in which it must cast off its chains and conquer the entire world. The teachings of Marx and Engels have not only thrown a bright light on the entire history and the imminent future of mankind, but it has proved

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to be an inexhaustible source of moral energy for those fighting as well. They have taught the fighters, battling for a new social order, to understand that their defeat was a temporary one, that they had no reason whatsoever to lose courage, no matter how hard had been the blow delivered against them. When on December 2, 1851, Louis Napoleon Bonaparte strangled the second French Republic, this smashing of the hope and the revolutionary dream, which still in 1848 seemed so near to realisation, entirely depressed many thinkers, even those who were very, very strong in mind and spirit (like Gertzen, for instance) ; they began to think that the senile European world was doomed to decay and extinction and that there was no prospect for or path to a better future. However, just at this time, Marx and Engels were organising the proletariat for further struggles, not having lost for a single day or to any extent their clarity of thought and their optimistic outlook.

The creators of scientific socialism did not themselves have this constant optimism from their doctrines, but they were able to inspire this optimism in the entire generations of fighters who followed their teachings.

Marx, in the last years of his life, looked with hopes upon Russia. He foresaw the stormy development of the revolutionary movement on Russian soil. Three years before his death Marx wrote jointly with Engels prophetic lines on the revolutionary movement in Russia, stating that this movement

> . . . . after the struggle—which may be of a protracted and severe nature—will finally and inevitably lead to the creation of the Russian Commune.*

Neither Marx nor Engels lived to see the day of the Great Proletarian Revolution, and its triumph in Russia, but how splendidly do they teach us to understand the reason why the present-day imperialist bourgeoisie reacts with such an unparalleled wrath, and is panic-stricken at the fact that the Soviet Union lies on the geographical map of the world instead of Tsarist Russia, that the true friend and staunch ally of the exploited throughout the world now occupies the territory of the gendarme of Europe !

Russia played a tremendous rôle in world politics in the XIXth century. It greatly influenced the fate of mankind, beginning with the period of Napoleon's wars, when the year 1812 marked the beginning of the bloody struggle of the European people against Napoleon's domination, and finishing with its participation in the Chinese events of 1899-1900. Always the activity of the Tsarist Government was directed towards the stifling of the liberating movement of the West, and Tsarist Russia was actually doomed by a correct definition of the founder of revolutionary Marxism, to play the rôle of the gendarme of Europe. It is true, however, that gradually the forces hostile to Tsarism grew during the XIXth century, at first slowly, and later on

*Marks and Engels, Works v. XV., p. 552, in Russian.

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more rapidly. From the Decembrists and Hertzen to the Petrashevtzy, from the Petrashevtzy up to Chernishevsky, to the revolutionists in the sixties and seventies of the last century, from the Zemlevoltzy and the Narodovoltzy, to the beginning and spreading of revolutionary Marxism, up to the time of the activity of the young Lenin and his first comrade-in-arms in the nineties of the 19th century—during all this time the struggle against autocracy and against the régime of exploitation developed and brought to the fore ever-increasing numbers of fighters.

The end of the 19th century found the autocracy still in power. However, its former foundations, both social-economic and ideological, were badly shaken. " The gendarme of Europe " was now itself compelled to worry constantly about its own salvation and not, as in the past, about marches across Europe in order to save the " thrones and altars " in foreign countries. That time was already not far distant, when the great heroism of the Russian people which was displayed in the wars of the 19th century in which Russia had taken part, was to show itself in the armed revolutionary struggle against the plunderers in their own country and against the forces of foreign intervention.

However, it was not only the rôle as gendarme of Europe that Russia played in the 19th century ; this was the century when the Russian people held one of the most pre-eminent and most influential places in world culture. Ancient Greece gave the world Socrates, Aristotle, Plato, Sophocles, Æschylus, Phidias ; Italy gave to the world Dante, Michael Angelo, Leonardo da Vinci ; France—Voltaire, Rousseau, Victor Hugo ; Germany—Goethe, Schiller ; England—Shakespeare and Byron. Russia came later to the world arena. Since the beginnings of its history date much later than other countries, nevertheless, during the 19th century alone it gave to the world Pushkin, Gogol, Tolstoy and Dostoevsky—four Titans in the art of the 19th century. " What then can we not expect of her in the future ? " were the words of the late outstanding publicist Marsel Samba in one of his speeches. We know that Russia, in the 19th century, gave to the world not only these " four Titans," but a whole galaxy of gifted writers, artists and scientists. But Samba, in offering this short list of names, was intentionally very chary, speaking of the immortal contributions of separate countries to the treasure house of world culture, he named only the titans of literature and art in the first place, and then only those titans who each in his own sphere wielded tremendous influence on the entire civilised world.

By general acknowledgment the 19th century was a century of incomparable contributions given to the world by Russian literature. But the time when Prosper Mérimée and the first translators " discovered " Pushkin and showed him to Europe, when Redenshtedt " discovered " Lermontov, when the famous French critic Saint Beuve began to write about Gogol, and when Paris, during the days of

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the Second Empire, met with stormy applause and incessant laughter the first performance of " Revizor," this time was only the beginning of the triumphant march of great Russian literature across the world. The powerful influence of Turgenev's prose upon Flaubert, Zola, Maupassant, Auerbach, Spielhagen was only the first indication of the influence of L. Tolstoy and Dostoevsky were to have over Europe and America by the end of the XIXth century. Critics and belletrists of the West unanimously acknowledged that after " War and Peace," " Anna Karenina," " Resurrection " made their appearance, after such works as " Crime and Punishment," " The Karamazov Brothers " were published, the demands made upon fine literature had grown to such a great extent that it became impossible to continue to write in the old manner, and the entire reading public of the world felt that in fine literature, in the art of psychological analysis, gigantic steps had been made along the path, which such great artists as Balzac, Stendhal and Flaubert, Dickens and Thackeray had just started to take, in the beginning and in the middle of the XIXth century. The more the great Russian writers became known by the end of the 19th century, the more they influenced the literature of the West, and this powerful influence of Russian literature in the 19th century was thoroughly absorbed by the 20th century. " After Shakespeare the world has known no one who enjoyed such universal fame in literature as L. Tolstoy," was the comment of several English magazines after Tolstoy's death. " Dostoevsky reigns as formerly in the world of literature in the West," stated the late Lunacharsky in one of his public lectures, sharing the opinion of all famous critics of England, France, Germany and Scandinavian countries. " The Russian Castor and Pollux of the 19th century, the two great Titans of literature," was the name given to the two Russian geniuses, Tolstoy and Dostoevsky, from the tribune of the Paris Sorbonne, which is usually chary in praising foreigners. The 19th century gave the world such great thinkers and revolutionary democrats as Belinsky, Dobroliubov, Chernishevsky.

Whereas in the field of creative literature, the Russians held first place in the XIXth century, their position being extraordinary, incomparable and indisputable, they also occupied one of the first places in pictorial art. They contributed such artists as Soorikov, Repin, Verechagin, Sarov ; in the sphere of music they gave Glinka, Muzsorgsky, Rimsky-Korsakov, Dargomigsky, Rachmaninoff and Tchaikovsky, and to science they offered the greatest geniuses of mathematics, Lobachevsky, who was considered " equal to Euclid," the chemist Mendeleev and physicist Lebedev, about whom the great Thomson (Lord Kelvin) said : " Lebedev made me yield as the result of his experiments " ; palæontologist V. Kovalevsky, about whom Darwin said that the history of palæontology must be divided into two periods : the pre-Kovalevsky period and the post-Kovalevsky period.

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The Russian, in reading the " History of the XIXth Century " must never forget that this century was precisely when for the first time the world significance of the Russian people was felt with special impact, when for the first time the Russian people gave to understand what great potentialities, intellectual and moral force is reserved within them, and what new path they can take alone, showing the way to all mankind, in the future.

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DOCUMENTS OF THE MONTH

THE FOLLOWING RESOLUTION was adopted by the Fifteenth Congress of the Communist Party of Great Britain, held at Birmingham on September 16—19, 1938:

The Fifteenth Congress of the Communist Party of Great Britain meets at a time of growing economic crisis and attacks on the standard of life of the British people led by the Chamberlain Government, whose shameful policy is threatening the democratic peoples of Europe, and in particular, the people of Great Britain, with the loss not only of their cherished democratic rights but also with the loss of their national independence.

Screened by the abominable and cynical lie that his policy is keeping Britain out of war, Chamberlain is promoting the Fascist conquest of Europe. All the might of British diplomacy, backed by the expensive armaments which we were told would be used to defend democracy, is being used to coerce the Czech State to agree to hand over a large part of its territory to Hitler-Germany, and with it, hundreds of thousands of German Socialists, Trade Unionists and Catholics, who will be exposed to all the loathsome terror of the Nazi fiends.

Chamberlain's aim is to build a Four-Power Pact with Italy, Germany and France—a Pact directed against the small States of Europe and the Soviet Union. The pursuit of this Pact is leading to the scandalous sabotage of European peace and democracy.

Actually the only result of this policy has been to dismember Czechoslovakia and give the Nazis fresh resources and a fresh incentive to proceed to the domination of Europe and the unloosing of a war against Great Britain.

It will place the great Czech Arms industry within easy reach of German Imperialism. It will open the way to the oil wells and granaries of Rumania.

It will be the complete justifications of the policy of blackmail and intimidation pursued by Hitler since 1933 and will spur the foul brutes of Fascism to fresh aggressions.

It will bring every small State in Europe under Nazi domination, as a prerequisite to the launching of a headlong attack on France and Great Britain. Already Chamberlain has facilitated this attack by allowing Fascism to conquer important positions in Spain, thus encircling France and cutting Britain's communications with the East.

The Chamberlain Government has pursued this scandalous policy of betrayal because it is the representative of those reactionary circles in Great Britain who in their own way are working for a Government similar to those of Germany and Italy, in order to have a free hand to ruthlessly pursue their class interests. They are, at the outset of the economic crisis, demanding a cut in the social services and the reduction of the standard of life of the British people.

They have aided the big combines in the munitions industry to accumulate scandalously high profits at the public expense, and have joined them in seeking to break down the standard of life of the munitions workers. They have put on the Statute Book as whole series of reactionary measures (Seditions Act and Public Order Act) and have sought to encourage the growth of the Mosley movement as a weapon against the British working class, because on their way to Fascism they see in the British Labour Movement, and in the cherished democratic rights of the British people, obstacles which must be swept aside.

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UNITY OF BRITISH PEOPLE AGAINST THE TRAITORS

The struggle of the British people against the Chamberlain Government is a struggle for its very existence as a democratic and unconquered people. This struggle demands the co-operation of all those sections of the people and of all organisations which are in opposition to this cynical treachery.

The British working class alone is not in a position to bring about an immediate reversal of this policy and to end the rule of the Chamberlain clique, and the other sections alone are not in a position to compel this change. The treacherous pro-Fascists, led by Chamberlain, are carrying out the historic ruling class policy of "divide and conquer," seeking through this policy to clear the way for a Fascist transformation of Great Britain.

The most important task in order to force a drastic reversal of the policy of the Government and to end the rule of the Chamberlain cliques is to create a common opposition amongst the workers, farmers and middle sections of society to the betrayal of peace and democracy exemplified in the dismemberment of Czechoslovakia. All these must be regarded as equal comrades in arms in the struggle for the defence of Britain from the policy of betrayal.

It is the duty of the British Labour Movement to lead the British people and take the initiative of bringing all these sections of the people together in a struggle to secure the defeat of the disastrous policy of Chamberlain and its replacement by a policy of collective defence of peace and democracy based on the co-operation of France, Britain and the Soviet Union, the starting point of which must be a common stand in the defence of the independence and integrity of Czechoslovakia and the support of the Spanish Government with the arms and food necessary to enable it to overwhelm the forces of German and Italian Fascism in Spain.

INTERNATIONAL UNITY AGAINST THE BETRAYAL OF DEMOCRACY

The struggle against the betrayal of democracy and peace demands immediate joint activity on the part of the British labour and democratic forces with the labour and democratic forces of France.

It is necessary for the Labour Movement of both countries co-operating together, to convince their peoples of the need for a concerted drive against Chamberlain and his allies in France, who are prepared to sacrifice Czechoslovakia and, with it, the security of all European democracies.

The people of France and Britain must be convinced that without such common action they themselves will be condemned to Fascist slavery.

On the basis of such common action the British and French peoples can extend the hand of friendship and solidarity to the real Germany and Italy—the Germany and Italy of the common people as distinct from the Fascist war lords.

On the basis of this co-operation, the British working class must resume its rightful place as the pioneer of international Trade Union unity, bringing all sections of the organised working class of the U.S.A. into closer co-operation with the workers of France and Britain.

With regard to the Soviet Union, it must carry through the Blackpool resolution calling for a resumption of the efforts to obtain International Trade Union unity, and in so doing must completely condemn and abandon the anti-Soviet policy of Citrine. If the British workers in 1919-20 performed yeoman service in the defence of the Soviet Union, so to-day the Soviet Union, on the basis of the mighty

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achievements of Socialist construction, is in a position to help the English people to successfully defend peace.

THE PEOPLE'S FRONT FOR PEACE AND ECONOMIC SECURITY

The struggle against Chamberlain's policy of betraying peace and democracy must be the starting point of a great popular movement, not only for the defence of peace but for the fight against the economic crisis.

Not only is the working class organised in its Trade Unions and political parties, but the middle sections of society, the professional workers, intellectuals and farmers have a host of organisations which we must seek to bring together in a common front on the basis of a common programme, and the working class should take the initiative in bringing about this common struggle and common movement.

The Communist Party puts forward the following proposals as the basis of such a People's Front movement:

For the defence and maintenance of peace by the collective action of France, Britain and the Soviet Union in defence of Czechoslovakia; for the lifting of the arms ban on the Spanish Government and the granting of credits to enable it to buy food required for its heroic defence of democracy; and for the establishment of an effective system of air raid precautions.

The nationalisation of the munitions industries with a view to preventing profiteering at the expense of the workers or the taxpayers.

For the fight against the economic crisis by the inauguration of a great scheme of public works, by special measures to establish new industries in the depressed areas and by the forty-hour week, the establishment of a minimum wage, and of Trade Union agreements in all industries.

The planned development of British agriculture in order to increase home grown food supplies and the reorganisation of the marketing schemes in the interests of farm workers, farmers and consumers.

The extension of social legislation, particularly through the adoption of the Youth Charter and increased Old Age Pensions and free secondary education for all.

The lightening of the burden of income tax on lower incomes, and a revision of the local rating system which places undue burdens on the small shopkeepers and resident owners. Increased taxation of the higher grades of income, increased death duties and taxation of site values.

For the defence and extension of all democratic liberties to be secured by the dissolution of the Fascist organisations, the imposition of the heaviest penalties against anti-Semitism, the repeal of the Trades Disputes Act, the Sedition Act, and the Public Order Act, and the immediate adoption of measures for the democratisation of the armed forces.

For the co-operation of the British people and the peoples of the Empire in the defence of peace on the basis of the immediate extension to all parts of the British Empire of the same democratic rights with regard to organisation, Press and free speech as exist in Britain. The right of the colonial peoples to determine their own destiny.

The Communist Party will carry out the widest and most intensive campaign for the popularisation of such demands, and for the creation of a common movement to struggle for them. It will co-operate locally and nationally in all struggles which aim at securing any of these demands, believing that such struggles will aid in the creation of the common movement on the basis of a common programme.

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While laying stress on the co-operation of the organisation of the working class with those of the middle sections of society, we must note that in the old bourgeois parties a regrouping of forces is taking place. The increased activity of the Labour Movement, its growing co-operation with the middle sections of society, will increase these differences and create the occasion for a new grouping of the progressive forces (in these parties) and their incorporation in a broad, democratic movement.

This People's Movement can take various forms. One of them is the United Peace Alliance which, in the form in which its was proposed, must not be confused with the People's Front, which means the coming together of the mass orgniasations of the workers, the farmers and the middle sections of society for struggle, and is therefore more than an electoral arrangement like the Peace Alliance. Such a Peace Alliance could, however, be a step to a People's Front, as could other forms of electoral agreement between the Labour and Democratic forces.

TRADE UNIONISM—A BULWARK OF DEMOCRACY AND PEACE

The British working class connot defend and advance its standard of life and lead other progressive sections of the people in a struggle to defend democracy and peace without an enormous strengthening of the Trade Union Movement which to-day only organises one-third of the working class.

For this reason the Communist Party stands for making every workshop, factory and pit, a fortress of trade unionism.

It stands for Trade Union unity, to be secured by the mass recruitment of workers to the Trade Unions, the 100 per cent. payment of the political levy, the coming together of all unions in a factory in a respresentative Shop Stewards' or Workshop Committee, and the amalgamation of Trade Unions on the lines of one union for each industry, the amalgamated unions to be based on the widest Trade Union democracy.

It stands for mutual aid between the Unions, the development of the powers and the machinery of the Trade Union Congress so that the workers of one industry shall be able to render assistance to the workers of other industries in dispute with their employers. It particularly stresses the need for the skilled workers in many industries assisting in the organisation of the semi-skilled and unskilled workers, and the women workers and the youth.

It stands for the organisation of the unorganised, particularly in the new industries which have grown up outside of the orbit of trade unionism. This organisation of the unorganised is only possible on the basis of a well organised, well financed organisation drive on the part of the unions, and not on the basis of sporadic local campaigns.

It stands for the closest co-operation between the Trade Union Movement and the unemployed organisations, for the building of the National Unemployed Workers' Movement and for the unification of all existing organisations of the unemployed in one national organisation under the Trades Union Congress.

THE CO-OPERATIVE MOVEMENT

The Labour and democratic forces of Britain can be strengthened enormously through the extension of the Co-operative Movement to embrace the majority of the working class and middle class consumers in the country.

Wherever possible, the amalgamation of competing and neighbouring societies should be encouraged with a view to greater efficiency. The Movement should be encouraged to enter fields of

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production and distribution that have hitherto been outside the scope of the Co-operative Movement.

The Labour and democratic forces must fight for the freeing of the Co-operative Movement from the State restrictions which hamper its development, from discrimination with regard to the Marketing Boards and from the burden of the National Defence Contribution.

Communists in Co-operative Societies should show themselves to be the most efficient, business-like members of the co-operative societies, laying the main stress of their activity on the winning of new members to the Movement and the extension of the trading apparatus.

They should encourage all co-operators to take advantage of the rich, educational and cultural facilities afforded by the Movement, and should promote their extension in every possible way.

The great feeling existing in the Co-operative Movement in favour of a Peace Alliance must be strengthened until the whole Movement is won for this policy.

THE COMMUNIST PARTY AND THE LABOUR PARTY

The powerful movement of the British people against Chamberlain is only possible on the basis of a closer co-operation between the Communist Party and the Labour Party. The Communist Party pledges itself to do everything in its power to mobilise the people behind every campaign of the Labour Party in order to secure its maximum success. The Party will help to strengthen the Labour Party throughout the country, particularly in those backward areas where the strengthening of the Labour Party is decisive for the development of the People's Movement.

In the course of such actions the Party will show to the mass of the Labour Party members and supporters the tremendous strengthening of the Labour Movement that would result from the affiliation of the Communist Party to the Labour Party.

This cannot be obtained without a powerful explanatory campaign exposing the shameful policy of the Right Wing leaders who, in fact, support the policy of the Chamberlain Government and seek, in the interests of the most reactionary bourgeoisie, to hinder the coming together of the working class movement and the widest masses of the people.

The unity of the progressive forces for the fight against the National Government and its policy would in no way compromise the Labour Party or weaken the fight for Socialism. On the contrary, it would win large sections of the people who are still indifferent to Socialism.

The Communist Party must aid the masses of Labour Party members to decisively influence the policy of the Labour Movement in the direction of the defence of the interests and of the standard of life of the British people by means of the concentration of all the democratic anti-Fascist forces of the country, even when such reactionary leaders remain at the head of the Labour Movement. In these circumstances the British working class will be able to defeat any reactionary leaders who subordinate the Movement to the interests of monopoly capitalism.

The Communist Party declares that it fully accepts the constitution of the Labour Party, asks for no special privileges, and will abide by all decisions of Labour Party conferences, accepting at all times the same obligations and enjoying the same rights as all other affiliated organisations.

THE ORGANISATION OF THE YOUTH

It is necessary for the working-

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class movement to actively assist in winning the whole of the progressive forces to give all possible help to the youth in their problems. In particular, this should be shown by the assistance given to building the British Youth Peace Assembly as centres of collaboration of youth in all parts of the country.

At the same time, it is necessary to assist the Youth Movement in its work for the Youth Charter and to increase the activity of the Trade Unions in this respect.

THE RELIGIOUS ORGANISATIONS AND PEACE

The British working class cannot but welcome the progressive tendencies that are showing themselves in certain religious organisations, and hopes these organisations will use their great influence in co-operation with the democratic forces, for the maintenance of peace, for the defence of human personality and liberty of conscience from the Fascist States and for the creation by legislation of such opportunities as will enable all youth to grow up as worthy citizens.

THE PEACE MOVEMENT

It is necessary to win all sections of the Peace Movement for support of a positive peace policy based on collective security, to expose the illusions created by those who stand for a division of the colonies with the Fascist States and repeated concessions to Fascism in Europe as a measure capable of maintaining peace, thus isolating the enemies of collective security.

We must strive to secure the strengthening of the Peace Movement by Trade Union, Labour and Co-operative representation and to bring about the clearest understanding of the correct working-class policy towards air raid precautions.

AGAINST THE FASCIST AGENT—TROTSKYISM

The successful defence of democracy and peace is impossible without an energetic struggle against counter-revolutionary Trotskyism, the agency of Fascism in the Labour Movement. In England, the Trotskyists seek to aid the reactionaries in their attempts to convince the English people, that all attempts to hem Fascist aggression, that co-operation with France and the Soviet Union will only bring war nearer.

At the same time Trotskyism spreads calumnies against the Soviet Union and the Spanish Republic and does its utmost to disrupt movements aiming at aid for China and Spain. The Party must direct attention to the fact that those agents of Fascism often work through other bodies—the I.L.P., and the National Council of Labour Colleges—in order to more effectively accomplish their objects. The Party must seek to mobilise all honest workers to drive those provocateurs out of the Labour Movement, while at the same time exercising the utmost vigilance in regard to dishonest and disruptive elements who seek to enter its own ranks.

BUILDING THE PARTY

The great tasks standing before the British people cannot be fulfilled without the powerful growth of the Communist Party. The rapid growth of this Party means the strengthening of that organising and inspiring force which will lead the British people in its struggle for the overthrow of the Chamberlain Government by a mighty People's Movement so that Britain by saving itself, may aid in the salvation of the world.

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BOOK REVIEW

The Peasants' Revolt

Nine Days that Shook England by H. Fagan. (Gollancz. 7s. 6d.).

THIS IS AN important and an outstanding book. Mr. Fagan has succeeded better than any of his predecessors who have attempted to write history for the people; he has combined mastery over detail and a living sense of the revolutionary traditions of the English people, with that broad understanding and insight that Marxism alone can give.

" Explanations " of the Peasants' Revolt among our academic historians have been many and ingenious; after all it is the kind of thing that takes a good deal of explaining away if you happen to be a respectable member of one of those famous institutions for giving the polish to the English ruling class. The Black Death, the raids of the Scots and the French have been allotted a major part of the blame. There is one well known economic historian who suggests that what was really the matter was that the peasants were far too well off and got rather uppish. Across the centuries class speaks to class.

Mr. Fagan has gone right through this veil of hypocrisy. He has allotted their correct place to these immediate factors as leading to a progressive development of the political consciousness of the peasantry and the masses of the people. The ransom money and the loot of the French wars acted as a solvent upon existing social relationships (p. 21). The French war produced a class of financiers whose shameless exploitation of everything from the major economic resources of the nation to the lust of a senile monarch ranged every class against them as they " battled over who should plunder England " (pp. 29-41, 80-3, 97). The revival of old forms of feudal exploitation in the labour shortage after the Black Death and the attempt to starve the people in real earnest by the Statute of Labourers (pp. 57ff); the blatant class enactment of the Poll Tax when politics " became a matter of bread as never before " (pp. 95, 121)—all went to steel a revolutionary temper among diverse sections of the population which had been long in coming to the surface.

But rightly Mr. Fagan sees this as the product of a slow and unseen social transformation which was breaking down the old feudal economy. He goes straight to the point. The peasant is " the Atlas of feudal society " (pp. 14, 17), and the position of the peasantry is changing. The growth of commerce and industry is producing a growing class of merchants and artisans; it is also changing the face of rural England. Lords are becoming producers for the market, either by increasing the rate of feudal exploitation (pp. 13-14), or by commuting labour services for money rents and becoming themselves capitalist farmers (p. 18). And many of the peasantry are becoming commodity producers and a division appears between those who are building larger holdings for commercial agriculture and those who are slipping downward towards the ranks of the proletariat. Capitalism is appearing within feudal society, little developed as yet, but becoming more and more conscious when subjected to the double exploitation of feudal lords and the war financiers. These social changes are reflected in the growing power of knights and burgesses in the House of Commons, and in the developing attack on feudal ideology as enshrined in the sanctuaries of the Holy Catholic Church—the greatest and most reactionary of feudal landowners.

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The revolt is a revolt of an alliance of classes—of capitalist farmers, enterprising peasants, artisans, workers, depressed villeins, smaller merchants. Mr. Fagan's Marxist analysis of the position of each of these classes in society is essential for any real understanding of the scale of the struggle and the reasons for its ultimate failure. The imperfect coalescence of these diverse groups at this stage produces the contradictions which he has described so well, between egalitarian and capitalist ideas, between the political consciousness of the Great Society and the " economism " and localism of the less advanced sections of the peasantry, as these appear in the programmes of the rebellion.

On these rocks the ship of revolution foundered. But its lessons remain, and that is what makes Mr. Fagan's book so important for every member of the Labour Movement to-day. There are a few small errors; he might have made more use of Lenin's great work on *The Development of Capitalism in Russia.* But these are small criticisms beside what Mr. Fagan has done. The History of the Great Society can show us many things—that from the very first an organised vanguard of the revolutionary forces was a natural and essential part of the development of the popular movement, that its finest leaders had that deep trust in the masses which is the foundation upon which any popular movement must be based.

And throughout the watchword is unity:

> It was their coming together in a great mass which had changed them. Alone and isolated they were helpless. . . .but merged into one vast body. . . . they had changed. Unity had changed the bent and submissive figure of the serf into the upright stance of the fighting man, carving out his future with his strong right hand. . . .nailing his demands upon the doors of the mighty lords with the swarming flights of arrows, shattering stout castle walls with the great blows of combined strength. Against the might of that combined force all that was powerful became powerless.

Let that lesson of the revolutionary past of the English people come home to-day. Once again wide sections of the people are being drawn into action against a ruling oligarchy; they are waiting for a lead that can come only from the working class, because there is to-day, as there was not in 1381, a dominant class that can take the leadership in the struggle. Let the leaders of the labour movement have faith in the labouring class that the dream of John Ball may become at last reality.

E. M.

SHORTER NOTICES

The Political and Social Doctrine of Communism by R. Palme Dutt. (Hogarth Press. 1s.)

THIS PAMPHLET, IN its first part, recalls the main facts of the world situation to-day, concluding that the " choice is between Communism and barbarism." It proceeds, secondly, to outline the aims of Communism " to liberate humanity from the present dependence on imperfectly mastered natural and economic forces, with the consequent antagonisms and class divisions." The third part analyses the problem of power as " the central problem of our period," setting forth what proletarian dictatorship means and answering objections. Finally, there is a concise exposition of present Communist policy—the fight for peace and democracy and the rôle of the People's Front. As a current introduction for the outside inquirer this pamphlet could hardly be bettered ; the active sympathiser will also find it of great value as a simple, closely reasoned, statement of the Communist case.

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Lenin by Christopher Hollis. (Longmans, Green. 10s. 6d.)

MR. HOLLIS WROTE a book called *We aren't So Dumb*. His present work, and its polite reception in certain well-known journals, casts doubt upon the assertion of that previous title. It is not, indeed, to be taken seriously at all. Its standards may be deduced from the fact that the notoriously rubbishy works of Valeriu Marcu and Fülöp-Miller are solemnly cited as authorities. Mr. Hollis refers to a hitherto unknown book by the Webbs entitled *Theory and Practice of Trades Unions*. Can it be that he has never heard of the classic *History of Trade Unionism?*

Foreign Affairs in Parliament. (Union of Democratic Control.) Annual Subscription, 12s. 6d.

AT A TIME like the present, when international affairs take an important place in everybody's minds, the publications of the Union of Democratic Control are particularly useful. This is a survey of questions and answers on foreign policy taken from Hansard, and is issued weekly while the House of Commons is sitting. Another recent U.D.C. publication is a set of notes, fully documented, analysing "the direct British responsibility for the destruction of Czechoslovakia and showing the consistent line of policy adopted by Mr. Chamberlain and his Inner Cabinet in their efforts to bring about the Czech surrender.

An interesting publication, issued by the China Campaign Committee, is a reprint of three articles from *The Times*, entitled *With the Eighth Route Army*. It contains valuable information on the Chinese struggle against Japanese invasion.

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Labour Monthly

Editorial and Publishing Offices:
43 MUSEUM STREET,
New Oxford Street, London, W.C.1
Telephone: HOLBORN 6656

The Editor of The *Labour Monthly* invites contributions. He cannot, however, be held responsible for MSS. sent to him or undertake to enter into correspondence regarding rejected contributions.

The articles in The *Labour Monthly* are indexed in the International Index to Periodicals, New York City, U.S.A., as well as in the annual index in each December issue.

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(Post free)

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One year - 7/- Six months - 3/6

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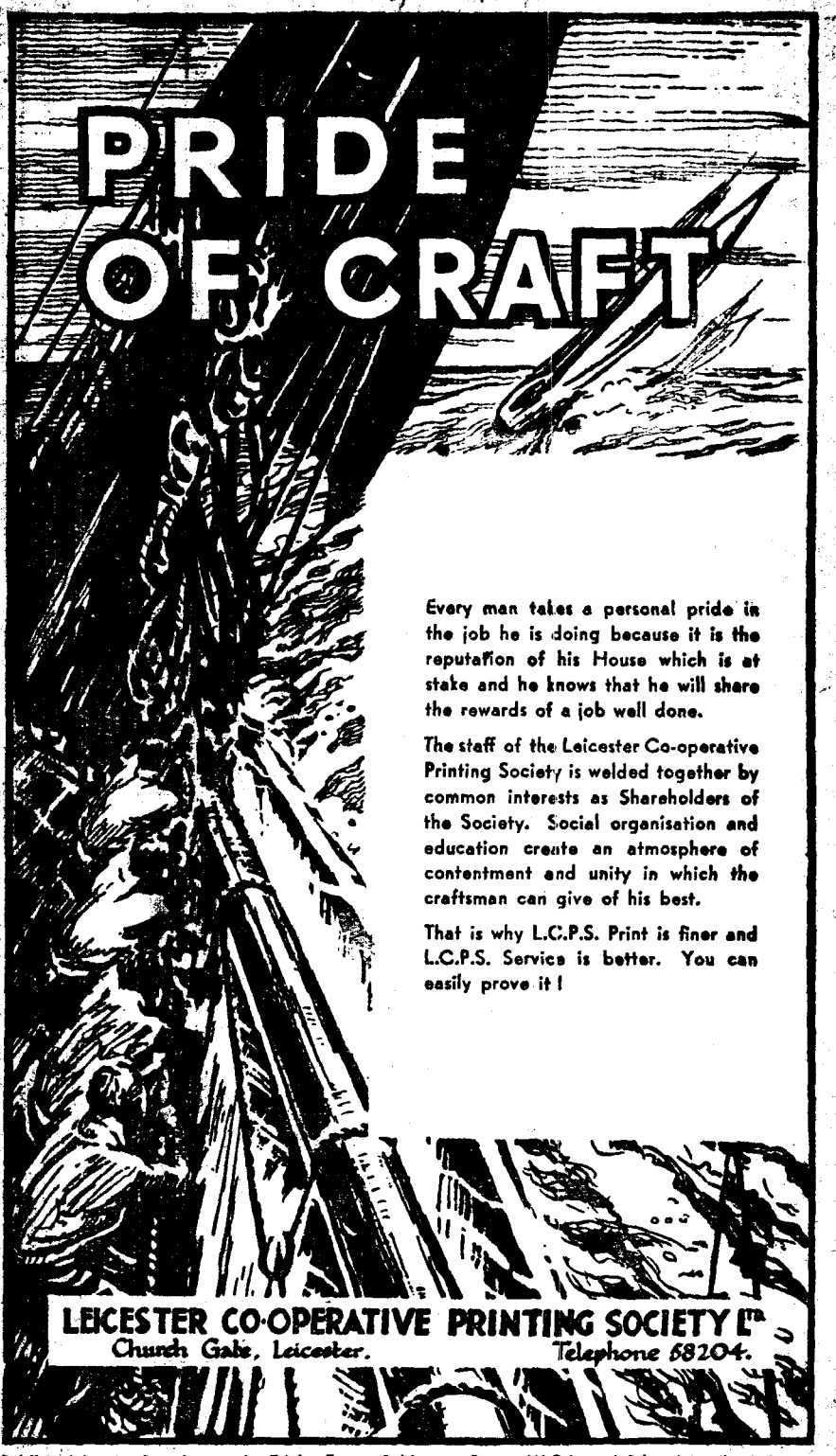
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Published by the Proprietors, the Trinity Trust, 43 Museum Street, W.C.1, and Printed by the Leicester Co-operative Printing Society Limited, 99 Church Gate, Leicester.

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